

Minutes of the Church Meeting at Goring URC
on Saturday 24th February 2024
at 10.30 in the Church.

Welcome: Val G

Devotions: Ryan Thomas read prayers written by Eddie Askew.

Those present: 18 Apologies 7

Minutes of meeting agreed and signed by Val G

Matters arising:

Safeguarding Training Update:

- No Full Report. Note: There are still people who have not signed up for the Intermediate Safeguarding training.

Val G welcomed Lesley Wake Manager of Little Fishes (LF):

Lesley introduced herself to the meeting and spoke about Mini Fishes (MF) on Monday mornings. She said that after the Ark closed it was felt that there was a need for a baby/children's group was needed in this area.

She reported that between 23 and 47 families attend weekly confirming there is a real need for such a support group for both children and their parents and carers. She made it clear that she would not be able to work in MF every week due to being committed to LF as manager, particularly with the retirement of Val G from MF.

Lesley went on to ask for volunteers who would be willing to give some time to the group, not necessarily every week or even all the morning, perhaps just an hour or two, it can be on a rota basis or on a Bank Staff type list of folk to call on. This is a very important outreach and the numbers arriving each week make it worthwhile. She explained the jobs are not arduous but very much appreciated.

If no help is forthcoming the group will have to close, which would be a great loss. Anyone applying will have to be DBS checked and have the necessary Safeguarding training which Mary will arrange.

See Bett Sweirk for information.

Inclusivity:

- Jonathan Cooper gave a talk about Inclusivity Asking how you become inclusive and do you find it easy? What if people don't find it easy and how should we react; particularly if the person has a disability that is invisible.
- It is important that we are aware of this, the meeting was shown a short film as though we were looking through the eyes of a child with Autism in very noisy and busy environments.
- After the film he went on to say that people on the Autism Spectrum have trouble processing what is coming in and just shut down, Jonathan bravely spoke of his own battle with Autism. If you see someone in need like this treat them gently and kindly like Jesus would have done. Do we stare or go away without helping. Some folk will wear headphones to cut out the noise around them.
- At this point we watched the film again with a different informed view. Then Jonathan ended with the words of the hymn 'Let us build a house'. Val G thanked Jonathan for his part in this talk.
- Wilfred Rhodes thought we should be reminded of caring for the people we meet and maybe the film should be shown on a Sunday morning. We like to think we are open and friendly but must be more careful the way we speak to people being more gentle.

Church Family News:

- Hilary reported that our member who had been in hospital is now very relieved to be home who thanked everyone for their prayers.
- A former loyal member of this church has passed away and our prayers are needed for his family, the announcement will be in Welcome.

- Hilary also said everyone is always in need of prayer.

Elders Time:

- We have got a name of the Visionary Companion who is to be the retired Rev Roger Wood from Hove. He also serves other churches including Emmanuel.
- The Elders will be meeting him and hopefully before July.
- The Elders have begun working on the things that have been laid down by John Bunker from the Synod Pastoral committee and are also to attend a training session on 'Time of change for Elders' led by Rev Andy Twilley.

Outreach report:

- Mini Fishes: Monday mornings, this group is well attended with up to 30 families attending on any one week, with new ones coming each week as well as the regular attendees. This shows the great need there is for this community outreach, and we are always in need of more regular help, we have tried various colleges, but Monday mornings are not the best times for releasing students for experience. If you feel you are able to help in any way, please speak to me, Bett, Val G or Mary.
- Coffee and cake: Monday afternoons continues to be well attended, with upwards of 20 people coming each week for company, tea, coffee and good cake. There is a small group who play a fun game of scrabble!
- Charity coffee mornings on the second Friday of alternate months; these are raising good amounts of money thanks to the generosity of those who come. The next one is on Friday 9th March, for The Anthony Nolan Trust, May is for Christian Aid and in July we are considering an animal charity. If there is a charity that you feel needs more support, let us know and we will put it forward for the next half of this year.
- The afternoon carol service and tea were well attended and enjoyed. We propose to hold another one this December, date to be confirmed. We are having an afternoon Communion service and tea on Palm Sunday, March 24th. Please bring along anyone you know who would benefit from coming, details and invitations coming nearer the time.
- The Outreach Group thought it was time to have another bring and share lunch and this will be on Sunday 30th June, halfway through the year. Details will appear in Welcome nearer the time.
- Our annual Barn Dance has been booked for Saturday 19th October. Ticket prices remain at £10 for early booking, but later bookings will be a bit more expensive and there will not be any refunds if people don't attend once they have booked.
- The housing estate, Elizabeth Square, next door, "launches" today, with the opening of the show houses, not that any others have been completed yet. We will be in the office on Monday afternoons offering cake to the sales reps, making GURC known.
- The Outreach Group and various others have been discussing the possibility of enlarging the coffee area for some time to make it more self-sufficient when there is no access to the kitchen. It will include a hot water dispenser, small sink, small under the counter dishwasher and fridge, with counter tops and cupboards underneath. The coffee trolley will then be used as a mobile counter on occasions. We are looking into the costs to see the viability of this.

Property:

- The replacement windows are still on the list and will be done in due course.
- Decorating the Hall and Cornwall Room is still waiting for the Quinquennial Survey which hopefully will be with us by the end of March. Possible decorating in the summer.
- Anything that you spot that needs doing please report it to Paul Redman or Bett Swierk.

Finance and Admin Report:

The following was read by Wilfred Rhodes who stood in for Matthew who is not well.

The next Finance Meeting is scheduled for 19 March so apologies to the group for not running things through them first.

- Accounts, Flower Fund: you will recall the flower fund was moved into the General Church account at the end of 2022. In pulling together the 2023 accounts I realised we need to deal with

an accounting technicality ahead of their presentation once finalised. The Flower Fund was previously reflected as a "Designated Fund" which status I propose to remove but require Church Meeting approval to do so.

- Including money transferred from the Flower Fund, income totalled £54.56 and payments £63.55 leaving an end year deficit of £8.99. In practice members buy and large donate flowers, meaning cash donations and expenditure are small. I would prefer to record both as Sundry items from a practical accounting point of view – the Church can certainly afford to subsidise the flower ministry from our reserves.
- I consider it impractical to maintain a Designated Fund with a negative funding profile (actual and prospective). However, I can provide a yearly analysis if and when required – I always analyse Sundry income and expenditure as part of my end year process so that I am prepared to respond to any questions which may arise. Therefore, now that it stands alone and no-one to do the job it comes into the accounts and the main account.
- Manse update: I have to report that things have not worked out with our tenants at the Manse. Things are on track for them to vacate in early March. So, we will need to start again. The Elders were fully informed of the situation and agreed that the circumstances would be treated as confidential. If there are any questions which do not require breach of confidence I will deal with these at the next meeting, when I will hopefully be able to report on progress toward reletting.
- Sanctuary Windows: Synod have at last appointed **two** surveyors. I have stressed our urgent need for a quinquennial survey visit and pressed for a date in March – as early as possible. We may be able to make a claim from Synod.

Letting Report:

- We have a new let on Wednesdays in the Main Hall between 11.30 and 13.30 Weekly, term time. It is for a charity by the name of SENSE – They have almost 70 years of experience in providing personalised support for people of all ages – from early life to adulthood. They provide opportunities for disabled people to be creative and active through holidays, arts, sports and wellbeing programmes.
- So, the group who are hiring our hall are a woodworking class and the class is run by a gentleman named Rob Anthony. They met for the first-time last Wednesday. In this group there are two teenage boys with learning difficulties along with their Carers. The numbers can go up to five teenagers with Carers but no more. Rob has booked for this half term through to Easter and this is being run on a trial period to ensure it works out for everyone concerned.

A.O.B:

- The Elders were asked if they could write to Carol Webber who is current Flower Secretary asking if she wants to stand down from the job. Val G will email her this week.
- Bett Swierk asked if folk don't want to stay in a job they must say so.
- Geoffrey Redman said in response to the Manse letting that perhaps the Ukraine scheme for housing could be considered as we have the house. He said the church would receive £350.00 per month and Val G said she would speak to Matthew.
- Notices and Correspondence:
- A notice from St Mary's Broadwater, We are invited to join an Evening of music with an extended time of worship. More information will be available.
- Books Alive: An independent Christian Book Shop in Brighton are asking people to check out their website to see what they do. www.booksalive.co.uk
- St Mary's Broadwater invite you on 9th March to a music and teams informal evening. Sign up through church suite or turn up on the night with instruments and voices.

- Susie Thomas reminded that the annual World Day of Prayer is at Ferring Baptist Church at 10.30 Friday 1st March, Everybody Welcome. Refreshments served. 700 bus. A second service at 2.30 at All Saints, Findon Valley.

The Meeting ended at 11.35 with some words read by Val G from the prayer by Eddie Askew in the opening Devotions.
The next meeting is Saturday 23rd March 2024 at 10.30.

Signed byVal Gill on 23rd March 2024