**Minutes of Church Members Meeting**

**held at 8.00 pm on 26 September 2018**

59 members present.

Welcome: Duncan Tuft

Apologies for absence. Duncan explained that now that Churchsuite is being rolled out and every church member receives an invitation to a church meeting with the opportunity to accept or decline 50 apologies for absence have been received so we will not be recording the individual apologies.

1. **Worship**

There was a time of worship led by Barry Dore.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

John Bawden presented the treasurer’s report, a copy of which had been placed in the Members’ area on the church website, and is annexed to these minutes.

1. **Membership Matters**

In Alison Dennis’ absence Duncan reported that there were no membership matters to report this meeting.

1. **Time of Prayer**

Duncan Tuft led an open time of prayer during which Alison Dennis, Vijay and Neesha Soba, Jean Lewis, Mike and Betty Burke, Serena Said, Steve Hatton, Day Time Alpha, Cafe Connect and our missionaries were prayed for.

1. **Community Outreach report**

David Rose presented a report from the Community Outreach group.

David reported:

1. Day time Alpha was progressing well and we are grateful to Hilary Ross- Smith and Bridget Osei-Adjei for being responsible for the event. There are now more guests attending than were present at the launch.
2. That Cafe Connect was continuing to be really well attended with 60 -70 people each week. Our thanks go to all who help to run this.
3. Evening Alpha will be starting up in January.
4. We are grateful to Roy and Anne Bawden and Joy Sims for taking on the leadership of Tuesday Fellowship.
5. There will be no pampering evenings this Autumn as it had been hoped to hold a craft event instead but this will not be taking place as there was not enough people able to help run it. It is hoped to hold pampering evenings in the first half of next year.
6. We are planning to more people sharing their experiences during services. Perhaps once a month.
7. We are approaching the council to see if the church could run a late spring early summer event.
8. **Policies.**

Duncan read the church’s Health and Safety policy and the Safeguarding of Adults at Risk policy which have to be accepted by the members each year. The members unanimously accepted the policies.

1. **Church Secretary’s Report**

Duncan Tuft explained the rollout of Churchsuite which consists of a data base of all the church members’ details that each member has given permission for the church hold. The administration of the church is based on this data base. Churchsuite will enable the church office to email members individually, hold all the duty rotas and remind members when they are on duty, enable members to book for church events and allow the office to hold the registers of various church organisations. It will also act as the membership directory as all members will be able to access the member’s addresses and email addresses etc. It will be rolled out in full over the coming months.

8 **Cross at front of Sanctuary.**

Mick Ledden reminded members of the history of tidying up of the sanctuary wall which has resulted in the banners and that the members voted for a cross on the wall.

At the last church meeting the members had passed resolutions to:

1. “to replace the present pulpit in the sanctuary with a modern lectern”.
2. “to have a cross incorporated into the design of the lectern”,
3. “to allow the ministers to choose the design of the lectern”,

Voting on a fourth resolution “not to have a separate cross on the wall of the sanctuary above the screen” was postponed until this church members meeting because an agreed resolution was already in place to have a separate cross and that therefore proper notice needed to be given of any possible reversal of such a resolution.

Mick showed slides showing the design of the lectern that the ministers have chosen incorporating a cross in the design and showed slides showing a design for a separate cross and the cost of that cross and the cost of fixing it to the wall. The details had been sent to church members prior to the meeting.

Mick asked for comments on the design of the lectern and whether it was felt that a separate cross was still needed given that the lectern will have a cross on it.

Claire Jones asked if we could have both. Mick said yes if that is what members want.

Louise Sturridge remarked that if the lectern is taken out of the sanctuary there would be no cross visible to people who perhaps were visiting the church for an event and they might not realise they were in a church.

Trevor Bradshaw agreed adding that the banners could also be removed for some events and a cross above the screen would give a point of focus. He commented that the lectern will be portable and would complement the cross on the wall.

Pippa Durn was concerned about how much the separate cross would cost. Phil Ross Smith pointed out the cost could be £4,500 including VAT which the church cannot recover.

Duncan Tuft felt that because the space above the screen is limited the cross would be quite small and a bit insignificant so high up on the wall.

Jim Green felt there would be less chance of damaging the screen during the fitting of the cross if it were to be located below the screen.

Mike Harvey referred to the time and money industry spends on thinking about image and felt the cross should be on the wall permanently to express what the church was about. Do not make the cost the main consideration.

Ruth Martin asked what size the cross would be. Mick said it would be a about a metre long.

Helen Yarrow said that the lectern being smaller than the pulpit would stay in the sanctuary on more occasions than the pulpit.

Jill Harvey wondered if a larger cross could go below the screen but there was a feeling that it would be obscured by the musicians.

Barry Dore commented that most of the time a speaker would be at the lectern and because people would be looking at the speaker they would see the cross on the lectern.

Roy Bawden pointed out that the sanctuary has been without a cross since he came to the church in 1977 and Derek Page reminder the meeting that it was the people that made us a church not the building and visitors should see Christ reflected in us without the need for a cross.

Mick Ledden then proposed a motion in two parts as follows:

“ that in the light of the information we now have about the design of the lectern and the design and potential cost of a separate cross

1. we should not to have a separate cross on the wall of the sanctuary above the screen or

2. that there should be a separate cross on the wall of the sanctuary in addition to the lectern.”

The two parts of the resolution were put to a vote and 37 members voted in favour of part 1 of the motion and 12 members voted in favour of part 2 of the motion and therefore the members decided that we should not have a separate cross on the wall of the sanctuary above the screen.

9 **Approval of/correction of Minutes of last meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2018 were approved.

1. **Any Other Business**

Roy Treadaway enquired about the broken window at the front of the church. Helen Yarrow reported that our insurers were going to cover the cost of a replacement at approximately £3,000. It will be about six weeks before the new window will be fitted and in the meantime a protective film has been put over the glass to keep it in the frame.

Gordon Webb raised some peoples concern over the volume of the music in services particularly if safe sound levels were being breached. Duncan Tuft said he would look into it and report to the next church meeting.

The meeting closed with a prayer from Duncan Tuft.

**Treasurer’s report to the church members September 2018**

As I said in the September newsletter, this time last year we were discussing how we could address the significant “underlying” (ignoring legacies/donations) cash deficit that the church was running year on year. It was a position that, although foreseen, had finally come to fruition because we had successfully recruited a full staff team and total offerings were falling year on year.

What a difference a year makes! The church has responded in terms of increased giving and total offerings are currently running at 4.0% above last year (although still £8,000 below budget). This increase in income, together with cut backs in expenditure, has meant that we have significantly reduced our “underlying” cash deficit run rate. We have much to be thankful for– praise the Lord.

There is, however, someway still to go and with inflation running at 2.4% (August CPIH), and adding circa £9,000pa to our running costs next year, we still face challenges going forward. With this in mind, the finance team have agreed a first draft 2019 budget which will be presented at the September church members’ meeting (CMM). The final budget will be presented for approval at the November CMM.

As regards the financial position to the end of August we are running at a surplus of £27,000, which is £3,000 better than budget. We always run at a large surplus at this time of year because we receive our Gift Aid rebate (£66,000, including £5,000 for the building fund) in one large lump sum early in the year and for the rest of the year we run at a deficit of circa £5,000 per month.

Although offerings are £8,000 below budget and our Gift Aid refund was £1,000 less than expected, these have been more than offset by legacies and one off donations totaling £16,000, to make total income £7,000 above budget. Expenditure continues to run close to budget.

Looking forward we are expecting to end the year with a surplus of £6,000. We have assumed that we will receive the £10,000 legacy from the Maisie Bertha Grant’s Estate, bringing legacy income to a total of £22,000 for the year. As a church we are still in a position of running at an annual cash deficit if we exclude legacies, albeit we are in a much better position than a year ago.

*The Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;  
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”’ (Numbers 6:24-26)*

Craig Rowland Treasurer