

SUTTON COLDFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH

Church Member's Meeting Minutes

21st November 2023

Attendance: 86 Quorum: 80

1. Welcome and Prayer.

Donald opened by reading from Matthew 19, discussing how crucial children are, communicating how we want to be a church that welcome, and helps children. The church and the people of God must be inter-generational, and children must be special. Sarah is leaving to go to South Africa, and we have always tried to seek to be an all age church.

Tomorrow we are running Living the Life for Hong Kongers. This church was originally built with a commitment to love children – it's in our DNA as a church, but it is not easy to be a multi-generational church. But our commitment to children remains steadfast.

Donald prayed.

2. Minutes of the last meeting.

Mark presented the minutes of the last meeting of 11th July 2023 which were duly agreed and accepted.

3. Membership.

The following person has asked to be removed from membership:
Sam Cozens

The following people have asked to come into church membership:
Paul & Annie Moseley

Donald explained that the staff and pastoral team go through our membership records and do make contact with those who have not been an active part of church life recently. We recently looked at a group of such people and wrote to them. They were given options to remain in membership, ignore the letter (which will ultimately remove them from membership), or tell us that they wish to withdraw from membership. This ensures that our membership records are as accurate as possible.

Our lapsed members recommendation is as follows:

Pete + Gail Andrews
Heather + Peter Brindley
Martine Carter
Nathan Drury
Grant + Hannah Henderson
Peter + Myriam Le Feurve
Joe Robbins

Donald asked whether anyone present could let him know if they knew a reason why any of these folk should remain part of the membership. We voted on the removal of the above names, and it was agreed that they would be removed unless someone knew of a reason to the contrary, which would be disclosed.

4. Youth Worker & New Staff Update.

Sarah Paxton leaves us in mid December to return to South Africa. She will leave a hole and will be missed.

The Leadership Team are, with Sam, overseeing a review of the roles that oversee the youth and young adults work going forward.

We will not bring a plan tonight, but we are going to see how things go in the short term, to be reviewed in a few months. We will be undertaking a review of current staff youth and young adults roles, and hope to bring a plan to the Church Members' Meeting in Spring 2024 with a job description for a new position. We would then hope to have an appointment ready for September 2024. We have budgeted for both roles.

Donald confirmed that he believes that the current team is good enough to maintain things as they are – but agreed that we will need an additional worker if we are to grow our youth work.

Donald asked for prayer for our youth work, and for Sarah.

5. Finance Update & Budget 2024.

- a) Mark referred us to two sheets - the current years figures, and the budget to date.
We currently have £2,736.32 as a general fund balance.
- b) Mark explained that he has been putting money aside for energy usage which we may be able to bring back into the general fund.
- c) Each year we get audited. Our past auditors have now referred us to other auditors, and our costs have also gone up to £5,000 from £3,500. The new auditors, as we went to tender, present acceptable value for money and seem to be thorough.
- d) Insurance is also a little higher than the previous year.
- e) We keep a decent reserve in case of problems.
- f) Referring to food bank, Donald shared how we have been blessed. In 2019 we had an average of 11 people visiting each day. In 2022, this rose to 36 per day. In 2023 this has again risen to 46 people per day. Financially, we aim for a consistent food bag that averages a value of £12 for each bag. This means that we have given out an approximate £142,320 value of food year to date, to the end of October 2023. This is made up of £76,830 worth of donated food. We also have financial donations from people, and also some grants from places such as Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust. At the end of October, we were in deficit of £9,600, and received a grant from the UK Government administered by the National Lottery, to an amount of £75,000, which is likely to be a one off grant, which will likely last until Easter 2024, so please do continue to donate, and provide food. Donald read a prayer for foodbank.
- g) Mark spoke about the 2024 proposed budget.
 - I. We have had to increase the budget for energy as several contracts renew in 2024.
 - II. The budget for insurance and audit fees has had to be increased.
 - III. We have been able to exit a contract with a technology provider and have therefore been able to subsequently reduce the budget costings.
 - IV. The salaries budget includes the funds for an Outreach Worker, and Sarah's salary. We would like to propose, going forward, that the amount that we would have paid that worker be put aside into another fund for safe keeping, to enable us to safeguard the availability of the funds for the future roles.

We voted on, and accepted the budget for 2024, and Mark prayed.

6. Christmas Plans

Donald explained our Christmas plans, and invited us to attend as much as possible, asking that we retain the back seats for visitors and late comers. Donald also explained that as Christmas Eve is a Sunday, it will be quieter than the Carol service, and will include communion. If you are able to park off site, it would be a real blessing to newcomers and those who find mobility difficult. Christmas Day – 8:30am Call to Prayer, 10:30am Christmas Day Celebration.

This Saturday 10-12 – Celebration of Creativity. 18 different groups displaying their craft, and 300 mince pies will be available to be eaten.

7. Prayer

We ended with a time of prayer.