

MINUTES OF CHURCH MEMBERS MEETING

MAY 24th 2017

Present: Peter Timothy (chair), Maxine Corrigan (minutes), Grace Dale, Nigel Parrott, June Day, Robin Day, Val Bayliss, Martin Bayliss, Myrtle catchpole, Elizabeth Saunders, Chris Yallop, Megan Mynhardt, Lester Jackson, Denise Jackson, Brian Robinson, Judith Gilbertson, Judith Edmonds, Malcolm Edmonds, Claire Timothy, Andy Hillier, Chris Hillier, Pat Hillier, Lessie Keenan, Richard Keenan, Louise Lyle, Peter Lyle, Michelle Page, Dale Bullock. (28)

Non-members: Lea Goffe, Tina Warner

Apologies: Millie Bishop, Pat King, Brian King, Kim Symeou, Nik Symeou, Cheryl Dixon, John Dixon, Claire Hamilton-Dene, Su Robinson, Marilyn Robinson, Kevin ward, David Waters, Jorge Damasceno, Mel Damasceno, Gary Saunders, Bradley Corteen, Bex Warden, Sandra Grey, Iona Nixon

Opening Worship: Peter opened worship with reference to the terrorist attack in Manchester on May 22nd. He read from this week's Baptists Together publication where Phil Jump Regional Minister Team Leader for the North Western Baptist Association had offered his reflection and prayer. Both were read and drew on affirming our faith and building communities of hope, goodness and compassion to build a better world.

Peter read from Psalm 66, the daily Psalm for today.

Worship continued as everyone sang 'Our God is the Lion'

Pastoral Update and prayers: Peter acknowledged a number of church members who are currently requiring additional pastoral support and prayers. In particular: Millie, who is in hospital; Marilyn who is still struggling with pain; Bradley who has good days and not such good days; others who were unable to attend. A number of non-members were also lifted including Michael, Dean and Natalie. Prayers were said for all these named plus others including their families.

Minutes of last meeting: The minutes from the meeting held on March 29th were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

Matters Arising: None that are not on agenda.

New Lease Agreement with playgroup: Peter explained the Trustees had been looking at the rental agreement with playgroup. Dilly was the manager for over 30yrs and it has been a number of years since any review has taken place. Sandra has looked into the current costs and produced figures based upon the size of the facility, current energy usage (based upon meter readings) and concluding that current charges are considerably less than perhaps should be. This includes a suggestion that a rent increase from £565pm to £682pm be considered. Peter asked members who may wish to have a full copy of Sandra's figures let him know and he will make it available.

Peter went on to say that it seems Connie charges less than other facilities so she does appear to have capacity to increase her income to offset any additional expenses. This type of facility is known as D1 and there currently is a short supply of this accommodation. Peter and Maxine will meet with Connie in the next few weeks and Connie aware of the likelihood of an increase.

June asked if trustees had considered that the kitchen was paid for in total by playgroup and that decorating of the hall has been paid and undertaken by them. In addition playgroup had originally been considered part of the church's community work. Peter responded that he aware of the extent playgroup had financed work at church including having the carpets cleaned each year but never heard before that playgroup was part of church mission.

Peter explained that since he has been coming in to church each Tuesday morning he has strengthened links between playgroup and church plus Louise Liddament continues to go each week.

Judith Edmonds mentioned she did a review with playgroup when she was church secretary.

Peter closed discussion.

Review of Intercessory Prayer: Peter reflected on the recent Intercessory prayer course organised and led by Nigel. Based upon the book by Dutch Sheets 16 people started the course however just 9 finished it. Peter explained it all about 'standing in the gap between people and God'.

Peter went on to say the course was very challenging and at times he did question and disagree with the book's author. This said he felt his prayer life has improved particularly in relation to spiritual warfare.

Louise Lyle gave testimony that at week 2 they were asked to pray for 2 people and although she thought it too big an issue she prayed for Anna and her boyfriend. However, six weeks later relationships between them and him, between Anna and him and between them and Anna has improved which in itself is amazing and continuing.

Michelle asked what Intercessory meant and is there going to be another— Peter explained it means on behalf of. Michelle asked if there is going to be another course. Peter said not at least until next year maybe longer as next year there will hopefully be another Alpha course.

Peter informed everyone that it is now planned to have an intercessory prayer team which Nigel will hopefully lead. The alternate Saturday morning prayer meeting has been discontinued with Thursday evening at 7.30 being the main prayer meeting every week, usually finishes 8.30-9.00.

Michelle asked if there is any opportunity to pray with other churches. Peter suggested this is something he would love to happen, however, at this time cannot organise himself. Nigel mentioned that June 3rd is UNITE's day of prayer being hosted at Park 10 – 6 then moving onto the Portuguese service. People are encouraged to come in for an hour or so to visit the prayer stations in praying for the youth.

Baptism and Church Membership:

Peter circulated a paper entitled 'Reflections from the church meeting discussion' (Addendum 1) which listed the main points from the discussion at the previous members meeting.

Peter went through each point.

- 1. Identity of the church is important. Part of the identity of Park has always been the practice of 'closed membership' and this remains important, as we recognise where God has led those who came before us. We should not dismiss that lightly.**

This remains an important points as those who went before us discerned God's will and decided this is what He would want.

- 2. We want to affirm the importance of immersion; both the symbolism that it provides of going down into the grave and being risen again to new life, and how it shows the totality of faith.**

June pointed out that the power of coming up through the water cannot be underestimated and the spiritual feeling thereafter giving that irremovable smile may not be felt by sprinkling. Brian pointed out that Jesus was immersed by John the Baptist.

- 3. We want to affirm that there is an important distinction between infant baptism and believer's baptism. Personal confession of faith is key.**

Elizabeth mentioned that born again feeling following immersion of leaving the old behind and becoming new is so powerful.

- 4. There is also a difference between infant baptism and believer's baptism which is not by full immersion. Quantity of water is important but not the most important element of baptism (repentance and confession of faith being primary).**

Martin pointed out that there is a difference of becoming a Christian and being a church member. As a Baptist church baptism is 'our thing' and makes us unique. The profession of faith as we become one of our brothers and sisters. Peter pointed out that many evangelical churches offer baptism by immersion. Originally the difference of this was one man could baptise another without being a priest. This gathering 'the church meeting' is what differentiates us from other denominations.

- 5. We recognise that Scripture points towards full immersion being the common practice among the early church and by Jesus himself.**

No comments

- 6. We affirm that the sole practice of baptism offered by Park Baptist Church is by immersion (notwithstanding circumstances where illness or disability prevent it).**

No comments

- 7. We recognise that there exists a tension between not wanting to be judgmental but also not changing the rules just for one or two people. Consistency in practice is important.**

Michelle asked if someone had a fear of water would they be exempt from immersion. Peter responded by saying under those circumstances he would have to speak to them about that.

- 8. We recognise that other denominational practices of baptism may differ from our own, and affirm the validity of baptism where repentance and a personal confession of faith has occurred.**

Would it mean that we say 'your baptism didn't count' if they wanted membership. This is the only baptism which affirms what we believe. Judith asked does that mean we would accept repentance and person's confession then they can become members – Peter said no. Claire T perhaps we would say 'it is important to us at Park for you to be baptised again in this way, then they could decide. Chris, I've been thinking how that person may be feeling and say 'I might as well do it'. Peter said that's where the church takes responsibility for ensuring we debate this topic. Michelle said that she was baptised for the wrong reasons the first time just to fit in with the church she was at, to belong. Peter said that vulnerable people need a discussion and careful planning required. June pointed out that baptism does not mean membership. Peter said for him baptism is a gateway into membership. Membership should not be elevated above baptism.

Peter closed the discussion and said the matter would be taken to the next leadership meeting to see if anything else needs to be done then bring back to next members meeting.

Cap Update: Pat Hillier gave an update on the CAP clients. Some have chosen not to continue with budget, others are progressing well. Many are asking questions on her faith and others already follow Christ. Prayers have made such a difference for new clients.

Peter mentioned that Gunton Baptist Church may become a church partner and London Road Baptist Church have been asking questions. Maxine asked if they would make a financial contribution to us to support the work. Peter said he would be suggesting that.

Peter closed the meeting in prayer.

Next meeting will be July 12th 7.30

Date of next meeting: JULY 12th 7.30PM



Park baptist church

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Ministers

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Park Baptist Church Meeting 24.5.17

Baptism and Church Membership

Reflections from the church meeting discussion:

1. Identity of the church is important. Part of the identity of Park has always been the practice of 'closed membership' and this remains important, as we recognise where God has led those who came before us. We should not dismiss that lightly.
2. We want to affirm the importance of immersion; both the symbolism that it provides of going down into the grave and being risen again to new life, and how it shows the totality of faith.
3. We want to affirm that there is an important distinction between infant baptism and believer's baptism. Personal confession of faith is key.
4. There is also a difference between infant baptism and believer's baptism which is not by full immersion. Quantity of water is important but not the most important element of baptism (repentance and confession of faith being primary).
5. We recognise that Scripture points towards full immersion being the common practice among the early church and by Jesus himself.
6. We affirm that the sole practice of baptism offered by Park Baptist Church is by immersion (notwithstanding circumstances where illness or disability prevent it).
7. We recognise that there exists a tension between not wanting to be judgmental but also not changing the rules just for one or two people. Consistency in practice is important.
8. We recognise that other denominational practices of baptism may differ from our own, and affirm the validity of baptism where repentance and a personal confession of faith has occurred.