**Minutes of Church Members Meeting**

**held at 8.00 pm on 30th May 2018**

41members present.

Welcome: Duncan Tuft

Apologies for absence had been received from: Barry and Chrissie Dore, David and Gill Durn, Gillian Harvey, Jan and Tony Rose, Diane Foster, Sue Allen, Tina Woodard, Lynn Strutt, Mick and Julie Ledden and Simon and Alison Dennis.

Duncan Tuft read a short passage from the Bible and then opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. **Worship**

There was a time of worship led by Roy Treadaway.

1. **Treasurers Report**

Craig Rowland presented the report, a copy of which had been placed in the Members’ area on the church website. The picture was an encouraging one. Since the last meeting there had been an increase in offerings and income was now cumulatively only 0.8% below budget. The 12 month rolling average was now showing an increase of 3% year on year.

Expenditure was £7,000 over budget due to three large projects: the upgrading of the sound and vision equipment in the Sapphire and Emerald rooms, the fitting of the new keypad, lock and intercom to the smaller entrance in West Way and the decorating of the Main Hall and other areas. These projects had been funded from the legacy fund as agreed at previous meetings.

An update on our position in relation to the significant deficit in the Baptist Union Pension Fund had recently been received. Significant additional cash contributions totally £33.5 million were being made to the scheme by the Baptist Union of Great Britain, with contributions being made towards this amount by all Baptist churches. RBC continued to pay a monthly deficit contribution at the higher rate. The rate would remain unchanged and the church’s contributions would now cease in 2028.

The church’s accounts for 2017 were with the auditors. Once the audited accounts were available they would be presented to the first available Church Meeting thereafter.

1. **Membership Matters**

Duncan Tuft presented this item on behalf of Alison Dennis who was away. There were no applications for membership to bring to the meeting. Resignations from church membership had been received from Ben Page, Brian and Lilian Tysoe and Sue Casey.

1. **Time of Prayer**

Duncan Tuft led a time of prayer remembering particularly those who were unwell and those who were getting older and frailer and praying for and giving thanks for Café Connect, Holiday Club and Holiday at Home.

1. **Policies**

Duncan Tuft read out the church’s Safeguarding Policy for members’ approval, an exercise the church was required to do once a year. Members agreed the policy and it was confirmed that Derek Page, Senior Minister, would sign the policy after the meeting.

1. **Community Outreach report**

Helen Yarrow presented a report from the Community Outreach group.

Helen confirmed that a review of the church’s safeguarding polices and other policies would be undertaken in the next few months as these had not been considered/updated for some years.

Helen updated members on successful outreach events which had recently taken place including:

* Two Pampering evenings which had been well attended;
* The Dad’s Weekend Camp which this year had taken place in great weather;
* The Craft Evening;
* Café Connect which had been very well attended and received from the outset. Some of the guests had now begun to attend Tuesday Fellowship and it was planned to invite them to Holiday at Home.

Thanks were recorded to all those involved in the organisation of these events.

Future events planned included:

* Holiday Club 23rd – 27th July;
* Holiday at Home – 7th, 8th and 9th August;
* A Daytime Alpha course which would run on Thursday mornings in September.

Hilary Ross-Smith had agreed to lead this as Alison Cave would be moving to Tokyo over the course of the summer.

There was a need for more helpers with the work of the Care Home Ministry. At present there were two teams visiting The Boyne and Brakenbridge. Members were encouraged to pray and consider where else in the community in this area of work the church could visit and if they felt God was calling them to be involved to contact either Helen Yarrow or Barbara Avery.

Members were encouraged to pray for all the guests who came to the Alpha course and for the Beta course which was just about to start. The latter would be led by Barry Dore with support from Carina Browne.

The Community Outreach Team would be leading the Sunday morning service on 3rd June. The focus of the service would be a relaunching of the team, sharing what the team does and a celebration of the activities and events that the church fellowship is involved in including involvement in outreach events organised by RBC and the sharing of faith with others in the workplace, in schools, with neighbours and in other areas.

Members were thanked for their willingness to complete the GDPR consent forms. The completion of these had enabled the assembly of an up to date database which would be very valuable when Churchsuite was launched. Members were encouraged to check the church’s website and in particular the new look events page and calendar linked to Churchsuite.

Chris Gardiner asked how long DBS checks remained current for. Helen Yarrow confirmed that the guidance from the Baptist Union was 5 years.

1. **Church Secretary’s Report**

Duncan Tuft presented the Church Secretary’s report. He confirmed that Ken Benjamin, the candidate which RBC has expressed support for, had been elected as president of the Baptist Union for 2019.

Members were encouraged to take a printed copy of the church’s annual report, if they did not already have one.

Members were thanked for their co-operation in the recent compliance exercise for GDPR. The Data Protection Policy had been adopted and this would now be placed on the church’s website.

1. **Front of Sanctuary – including replacement of the pulpit with a new lectern and the installation of a cross at the front of the sanctuary**

Phil Ross Smith introduced this item and gave reasons why replacing the present pulpit with a modern lectern would be sensible.

A new lectern would have a cross on it which raised the question as to whether we would also need a separate cross at the front of the sanctuary.

Duncan Tuft then put a four part resolution to the meeting and each part was voted upon separately as follows:

Members voted unanimously in favour of part 1 of the Resolution “to replace the present pulpit in the sanctuary with a modern lectern”.

On part 2 of the Resolution “to have a cross incorporated into the design of the lectern”, 37 members voted in favour with no votes against and 4 abstentions.

On part 4 of the Resolution “to allow the ministers to choose the design of the lectern”, 40 members voted in favour with no votes against and 1 abstention.

It was agreed to postpone the vote on part 3 of the Resolution “not to have a separate cross on the wall of the sanctuary above the screen” until the next meeting. It was pointed out by one member, Trevor Bradshaw, that an agreed resolution was already in place in relation to this and that therefore proper notice needed to be given of any change.

1. **Approval of/correction of Minutes of last meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2018 were approved.

1. **Any Other Business**

The following items were raised:

* Derek Page informed members that Chris Short, a former Assistant Minister at Ruislip Baptist Church, has moved from Park Street Baptist Church, St Albans to take up the role of Senior Minister at Eastbourne Baptist Church. His induction would take place in June. Phil Ross Smith commented that former members of RBC, Paul and Nancy Houston, who currently attended Eastbourne Baptist Church, had been praying for a good Senior Minister and saw this as an answer to prayer;
* Gordon Webb raised the question of why Chris Short was shown on the display board of past ministers as a “Mr” rather than a “Rev”. Derek Page clarified that Chris Short had not been ordained during his time serving as Assistant Minister at RBC.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm with a prayer from Duncan Tuft.