

(draft)

Immanuel Church Chichester

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 21 April 2024 at Bishop Luffa School

The meeting was led by Chairman of Trustees, Peter Bradley, and Senior Minister, Paul Collins, with a total of 58 people attending. After an informal start with cheese and wine, the formal discussion began at 6.15pm and ended at 7.25pm.

Summary of discussion:

1. **Welcome and introduction** - Peter Bradley welcomed all those attending and opened in prayer. Peter reminded the meeting that a fuller description of church activities in 2023 is included in the Annual Report and Accounts which is available on the church website. He recognised the contribution made by the employed staff (Shane and Emma) and also the many people who willingly contribute many hours of service for the Kingdom of God, a lot of which is confidential and therefore not widely known.
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from John Manning, Peter and Pauline Sutton, Mark Ingamells, Liz Dyson, Jacque Morton, Marjorie Pattison, Victoria Pollock and James Nickols
3. **Minutes of the AGM on 16/4/23 and the General Meeting on 15/10/23** - were each accepted as a full and accurate record, following removal of spelling mistakes.
4. **Matters Arising from the minutes:** none.

Peter explained that there was a very high level of support received for each of the candidates for election, well in excess of the 60% required. There are 103 registered members of which 58 (56%) voted, all using online voting.

- 5 **Results of Elections for Leadership Team** – Carol Grove has therefore been re-elected. Emma Darbyshire has been elected. They will serve alongside the other previously elected Leaders Shane and Monica, as well as our ministers Paul Collins and James Nickols. Claire Watts and Jules Allin have stood down from serving on the Leadership Team during the past year and were thanked for their contributions.
- 6 **Results of Elections for Board of Trustees** – Jon Allin has been re-elected and Chris Hill elected. They join other previously elected church members Chrissie Bacon, Bethia Nickols and Peter Bradley who, along with Paul Collins, now form the current Board of Trustees. Grant Pollock has stood down from the Trustees after serving for three years and was also thanked for his contributions.
- 7 **Deanery Synod Representatives** - Jules Allin has stood down from being one of Immanuel's representatives so a vacancy has arisen to serve alongside Penny Willard who continues as one of our representatives. Paul explained how churches can influence national church policy through the synodical structure and requested nominations for attending the Deanery Synod

on behalf of Immanuel. Members were encouraged to consider if they wanted to volunteer into this role.

- 8 **Safeguarding update** – The meeting was reminded that Annette Lawrance-Owen is our Safeguarding Officer and works alongside Paul and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. On behalf of Annette, Peter thanked the members for doing the training as required (without which we would not be permitted to operate as a church, or more importantly we would not be able to provide a framework within which we can help protect adults and children in the congregation). He recommended to members that they watch the recently released video by Matt Redman, in which he shows from personal experience how abuse can happen within a church, how it can go unstoppable and the awful impact it has (maybe watching this as a part of our small groups would be most helpful). He reminded the members that if there is any concern about the actions or words of someone around you that there are always people who can help – if so please speak with Paul, Annette or members of the Diocesan Safeguarding team.
- 9 **Health and Safety update** – Peter pointed out three practical safety tips relating to use of the main hall for meetings: -
- take care going up and down the steps and help those that do need help in doing so
 - mop up spilt drinks otherwise the floor is very slippery, and
 - in the event of the fire alarm sounding please exit (calmly but promptly) from either of the 2 entrances we use and gather at the muster point which is on the grass next to the main car park entrance (not on the road as you might get run over by a fire engine).
- 10 **Financial Report:** David Grove summarised the budget position, circulated copies of the Immanuel Church Budget 2024 and highlighted several key points. We currently have a healthy bank balance (enough to fund church operations for about 9 months). Membership numbers have grown, as has income, and this would need to continue as we continue to deal with three large areas of expenditure.
- a) We continue to increase our Parish Share contributions to the Diocese. We are on target to honour our longstanding pledge to meet full Ministry Costs by 2025. This is accordance with the plans made when we moved from self-funding our minister to the Diocese employing the minister.
 - b) We are pleased to have appointed Emma to the Children and Youth Worker position, but the salary represents an additional financial commitment.
 - c) We currently pay Bishop Luffa nearly £10,000 each year for hire of the school hall and associated facilities but this avoids the direct responsibility of having our own church building. Future hire charges are expected rise as the school faces higher energy and building maintenance costs.

Thank you again to David Grove for all of his work as church treasurer and for all of his help in making financial decisions.

11 **Questions** –

Q1 – Could you give us a breakdown of what the Parish Share funds? About 60% covers the ministers' salary, pension contributions and other housing costs; 20% goes to training new clergy (such as Lou); 15% covers the cost of Diocese functions including support for ministers

and the Safeguarding team; and 5% goes to the cost of running the national church oversight and the Arch-Bishop's activities.

Q2 – The Ladies Christmas meal, for example, is shown as a cost but everyone paid for their own meals. So why is it shown as a cost? If the cost of activities goes through the Immanuel Church accounts then we show the income from tickets etc, as well as the outgoing costs – these typically balance each other out.

Q3 – Administrators Salary is shown as a reduction from last year. Does this mean we are paying a lower salary? No. This budget line reflects the salary position as previously held by Paul Dickson who worked 3 days per week (2 days as Worship Leader and 1 day on Administration). Currently Shane works 2 days as Administrator (the worship leading is being done by Josh, supported by Peter, and is not now salaried).

12 Church Ministry Report and Questions –

- a) Paul added to the thanks by saying how much he has valued the work of many people, especially David Grove as treasurer. Many parish churches do not have the dedicated volunteers that we do. Paul also expressed thanks to the support he personally receives from our other clergy – it is very helpful having people around who understand the pressures in the role.
- b) Lou has just heard that her curacy is unlikely to go ahead as planned due to the incumbent having to leave due to family commitments. Discussions are currently ongoing with the Diocese for a replacement position.
- c) The Leadership team continue to pursue the 3 main priorities (Children and Youth, Discipleship Pathway, and Invitation) – whilst progress has been made in each area, we want to continue to develop these aspects of ministry

Paul then invited a number of contributions.

- d) Monica spoke of the need to underpin everything with prayer and there are plenty of opportunities to get involved. The '24 hours of prayer' events will recommence and include a prayer and worship evening. There are pop-up prayer events and WhatsApp prayer sharing and encouragement groups (please speak to Monica about joining these). Also Immanuel Prayer Warriors (text notification service run by John Manning), continues to distribute important prayer requests. 'Lord, give us your Holy Spirit desire to pray together.'
- e) Monica also spoke about our small group ministry. We have recently increased the number of mid-week communities. We have held Group Leader meetings for feedback and mutual encouragement.

Monica then shared her news that she will take a sabbatical to focus on her healing as her treatments are very tiring.

- f) Emma Darbyshire gave us an update on Children and Youth work. On Sunday mornings the numbers of children and volunteers are increasing. Termly volunteer meetings are hugely appreciated. We are currently reviewing All-Age Services and aim to shift to multi-generational participation. We are a registered Messy Church and the meetings are popular, including attracting some from our Monday morning Conker Club for babies and toddlers. Youth Alpha is ongoing and proving to be very popular, as are the regular games nights. Emma is also involved in citywide youth and Leader events. She also has some

involvement with Bishop Luffa school, including setting up a prayer space for staff. Going forward she would like to set up prayer partnering for individuals in our Youth with members of the congregation, continue to develop Sunday morning activities, expand discipling and mentoring for youth and to pursue outreach to non-church children and youth.

- g)** Penny Willard outlined the progress made to becoming a partner with TLG (Transforming Lives for Good) which is a para-church charity which co-ordinates action in their mission to bring hope and a future to children through education for disadvantaged and struggling children. Many children are currently not coping with schools (leading in too many cases to suspensions and exclusions). Our aim is to work with Rumboldswyke School. Volunteers would need to commit to 2 hours per week, part of which is to get alongside a pupil in school and provide supportive encouragement for families too. We have 3 volunteers so far. Immanuel Church has received a private donation which would meet our costs of running this support programme for 2 years. Immanuel members could also get involved by committing to pray for our coaches and the supported children and families. Please speak with Penny for more information.

Paul concluded by again thanking all those who contribute, most of whom do so quietly and behind the scenes.

- 13 **Any other business** – none raised. Peter closed the meeting with a prayer of thankfulness for all that God is doing and Monica led us in singing in worship.