

# DRAFT

**Immanuel Church, Chichester  
General Meeting held on 13th October 2024  
At Bishop Luffa School Hall**

The meeting was led by Chairman of Trustees, Peter Bradley. Approximately 28 people were present. The meeting started at 6pm and ended at 7.10pm.

## **1 Worship and Welcome**

After welcoming those present Josh led worship and Peter Bradley opened in prayer and reflected on Lamentations 3:21-24 . We are in a time of waiting, but we are active in our waiting. He said that at this meeting we would hear about some of our current activities, but not all (we had heard from Pauline in the morning service about planning to recommence Healing on The Streets, Lee and Emma are doing great 'kingdom advancing' work amongst students and young people and in their Home Church, we heard in detail at the AGM in April about our children and youth work).

## **2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Peter and Jenny Evans, James Nickols, Liz Dyson, Grant and Victoria Pollock, Jo Osmond, Jonny Darbyshire, MaryJoy Fairfield and Annie Bradley.

## **3 Operation Dog Collar (AKA vicar replacement process)**

Peter explained that Paul and Lou left well – their leaving tea party was attended by over 80 people, Paul's final service was also very well attended and that we prayed for their future ministry and for the family. The financial collection for Paul and family so far totals about £2,300.

Bishop Ruth, our overseeing Bishop, will be directly involved in the process for discerning a replacement. She has congratulated us on producing a really excellent parish profile, which is now nearing completion. We have been asked to select 2 trustees or leaders to join an interview panel with her and either the Archdeacon or the Rural Dean.

She recommends a timetable for advertising that gives us the strongest available pool of resources: - advertise early November, shortlist mid-December, interview mid-January. It was noted that it could be after Easter before a replacement is in post.

She would advertise this post via Anglican channels nationally and via Anglican social media groups including those particularly focussed on evangelical clergy.

We are encouraged.

In the meantime – we continue to wait patiently and actively. Peter said that this inter-regnum is an opportunity for us to continue to develop who we are and how we want to be known. Many activities of the kingdom of God will rightly continue. However, we have lost a key member of the team, the slack is being taken up by trustees and particularly the leaders (Shane, Emma, Monica, Carol and James), the pastoral team, the Sunday set up team and by those who lead Sunday services and by those who preach. We need not be afraid to question whether we should continue to do everything as before, and particularly at this

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time we should all look out for those taking on added responsibility, to support and encourage them.

There were no questions at this time.

## **4 Finance**

David Grove explained that membership has levelled off and some standing orders have been cancelled due to people leaving. If this situation remains unchanged then it will impact our income and reserves levels, probably more next year than this year. Immanuel currently has about £94,000 in the bank, though this would cover only 9 months of our typical operational costs. We are also still on target to meet our commitments to increase our giving to the Chichester Diocese to the full level of the Parish Ministry Costs by 2025, as was planned 8 years ago when we changed to having a CofE employed minister.

Justin asked do we still need to see growth in membership to see income grow greater than inflation? David answered that we will do medium term (5 year) forward projections to assess what growth would be required to meet planned employment and activity levels. Peter added that, unless we significantly change employment or activity then from 2025 (having reached the full the Parish Ministry Cost commitment) 'all' we need to do is to keep pace with inflation.

Annette thanked the church for the donation to Options which helped them to continue operating and gave great encouragement at a difficult time for this valuable charity.

The following activities and issues were discussed and prayed about by everyone attending the meeting.

## **5 Prayer for vicar replacement** (led by Peter Bradley)

Main prayer points:-

- Thanks for Paul, Lou and family, for all they brought us, and for their future ministries, for all of them.
- For all of those involved in the discernment process for a replacement, especially Bishop Ruth, for good communication and unity in decision making
- For God's anointed replacement, for preparation of hearts and minds for all the change and new things to come

## **6 Prayer for Transforming Lives for Good (TLG)** (led by Penny Willard)

Coaches have been trained (Serena, Shane and Emma D) and contact with allocated children and families has started. Class teachers and the head teacher (Rumboldswyke Primary School) are thrilled that this support is available.

Prayer requested for the coaches, pupils, their families and the school. For Penny in her administration and co-ordination role and thanks for her vision to see the potential and the practical work to see it start.

## **7 Prayer for Pastoral Ministry of Immanuel Church** (led by Shane)

There is a pastoral team which aims to lead and to coordinate pastoral care of Immanuel attenders and those associated with us (Peter and Jenny, Annie Bradley, John Manning,

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Shane and Jaquie). We acknowledge the work that Peter and Jenny have done over the years and for others who also just go about the work of loving, caring and supporting.

Matt Eaton is undertaking a Chaplaincy course and will be starting to support others in this capacity (eg taking communion to homes).

Prayer is requested for those on the pastoral team, Matt, all of those others who contribute to caring for church attenders (eg midweek group leaders) and groups reaching out to those on the edge of church (eg Chatter Natter, Lee and Emma). We were challenged to think who else needs support at this time.

## **8 Prayer for our world (led by Monica)**

Prayer pointers: -

- The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Let us ask the Lord for workers.
- Jesus told us to go and make disciples. Let us seek God as to how we make disciples and that we would grow as disciples too.
- Stopping the Israel/Iran war and for those affected by war.

We worshiped, led by Josh.

We wait patiently, and actively.

## **9 Close**

Peter closed the meeting at 7:10pm and thanked all of the contributors and everyone for coming and praying.