

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2024 at the Methodist Church

Present

James Whately	URC (Chair)	Val Smith	Methodist
Sue Hancock (Secretary)	St Michael's	Julian Macro	URC
Barbara Walton (Treasurer)	St Michael's	Paul Williams	NLCC
Nick Wood	Methodist	Julia Palmer	St Michael's
Stephen Walton	St Michael's	Brian Wiggins	St Michael's
Paul Fox	Verwood Elim Church	Vanessa Wiggins	St Michael's
Marius Potgieter	NLCC	Martyn Hancock	St Michael's
Dale Kratske	NLCC	Elizabeth Ingram	St Michael's
Carolyn Johannesen	URC	Deborah Matthews	St Michael's
Debra Ferry Pyper	St Michael's	Duncan Moss	St Michael's
		Peter Thompson	Verwood Elim
		Doreen James	St Michael's

1. Introduction and prayer James welcomed everyone and, having read Ephesians 2:13-22 offered words of reflection and prayer, emphasising that whilst our individual journeys with Christ may differ, we remain united in Him.

2. Apologies Jenny Baxendale, Ken and Chris Lyndon; Lynne Ings; Ann Bale and Tim Leavers

3. Minutes of the last meeting Minutes of the last meeting on 10 January 2024 were approved by the meeting and signed by James.

4. Election of Officers

a) Chair. James reminded the meeting that he was not standing again, and sought nominations or offers to take the role, but there were none. James advised that in these circumstances, a Chair would need to be appointed on an ad hoc meeting to meeting basis, and in the absence of any nominations this way forward was unanimously agreed. Deborah and Nick both agreed to Chair when the Meeting was at their church. Following discussion, it was agreed that the principle of alternating lay and clergy chairs was an ideal to be aspired to.

b) Deputy Chair. No nominations and no appointment

c) Treasurer. Barbara Walton confirmed that she would be prepared to stand again, and she was unanimously approved in this role.

d) Secretary. Sue Hancock also confirmed that she would be prepared to stay in office, and this was unanimously approved.

5. Matters arising None

6. Financial Report Barbara handed out the Accounts she had prepared, and which had been audited by Chris Lyndon. She took the meeting through the Cash Account and explained the handwritten additions. The healthy credit balance, she explained, was due to the transfer of the balance of the Reserved Funds as agreed to the General Account. There was discussion over the 2022 cheque to the

British Legion for the Poppy Appeal that had still not been cashed, and the meeting agreed that it should be formally stopped (as Barbara had been advised that even though not valid due to lapse of time there was a risk that if presented in the future it might just slip through) as she was told that no cost would be incurred by doing this. The amount should be added to this year's British Legion donation (less any charge made for stopping the earlier cheque). The issue of the level of subscriptions would be considered after the discussion about the Christmas Cards.

7. Future of the Christmas Cards Sue had previously circulated her findings on the capabilities and costs of the potential advertisement in two local magazines. Nick was particularly keen on the offer made by the Focus magazine, which he described as quality magazine, of the centre 2 page spread and which he felt was a 'no brainer' on cost. It was agreed that to obtain the coverage, advertisements would need to be for two months for the Verwood Directory. Steve Walton advised that he had investigated the price of Royal Mail postage to BH31 6 and BH31 7 areas, which was £462 plus VAT. Barbara gave the details she had been asked to obtain for a smaller print run of 3-4,000 cards, but there is no plan to reduce the circulation number from the 6,300 properties Steve has ascertained are in the Verwood area. He had obtained a quote from IMS in Ringwood of £359.10 plus VAT for that number of deliveries. A general discussion ensued and several people were very positively in favour of retaining a Christmas Card, having received many appreciative comments from recipients, and recognising that it ensured that the message of Christmas was delivered to homes. A less expensive type of card was put into the melting pot for consideration as was the fact that people were not as focussed on cards now. James took a vote by show of hands which showed a clear majority in favour of keeping the Christmas Cards. Barbara said that she would explore costs of these with Mike Shier, who currently charges only for the card being used and who bears all the production and printing costs.

Action : Barbara will bring a full cost estimate to the next meeting in September so that a final decision can be made.

The meeting returned to consideration of subscriptions and the suggestion of an increase to £200 was unanimously accepted. Concerns were raised about the high cost and whether this was the best use of the money for communicating with the community. James urged attendees to seek donations from church members to help cover the costs. The suggestion that Boy Scouts be used to help deliver was scotched due to safeguarding issues.

8. Correspondence Sue received an email from a couple who worshipped in the Roman Catholic church, the nearest to Verwood being West Moors and Ringwood, and asked if they could be added to the Christmas Card circulation list. It was agreed that this would not be appropriate.

Action: Sue to respond accordingly.

9. Review of Events

- **Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** held on 21st January 2024 at the URC. No feedback.
- **Lent Groups** There were 4 groups and although a smaller number of groups the average attendance overall was 30+. All comments received about the groups and material were very positive.
- **Service of Witness on Good Friday on 29th March 2024** This had to be held in the URC church due to the bad weather, but was very well attended with standing room only in the church and overflow into the hall. The 100 service sheets printed proved inadequate and more are asked for next time. The music group was especially appreciated and a request made for more 'gigs' by that group.

- **Pentecost Service.** This could not be held on the Rec because insufficient time had been allowed for planning. There was no question that they had been ousted by the Fun Fair which used the Rec over that period. Julian warned that occasionally unofficial events occurred on the Rec and that should be taken into consideration in future plans. The service was regarded as excellent and successful.
- **Christian Aid week.** No specific feedback.

10. Other Reports

- **Coach in the Community.** Paul W gave the update, reminding the meeting that Julie Bradshaw, whom he applauded for her skills and gifting, was working on the fringe with young people. He was grateful for the generous donation, which has been put towards the necessary maintenance and upkeep of the bus, including the high insurance costs. He was pleased to report that it would be going out for the first time on Thursday 23 May and whilst starting with just Thursdays at this time, they hoped to build on this.
- **Foodbank.** Hank reported that the Foodbank remained, sadly, busy. He thanked the URC for permitting use as a distribution facility. The last period saw approx 1200 individuals fed for at least 3 days. Having experienced a decrease due probably to grants etc, since 1 April a 10% increase in usage was noted. Julian advised that one of the Town Mayor's charities this year was Foodbank.
- **Prayers for Healing.** Marius advised the meeting that the monthly prayers for Healing and Revival had started before Covid and continued through that time via Zoom. The meetings were now face to face and on the third Saturday of each month, with a core attendance from most of the churches of about 12. The prayer was primarily for miraculous healings in the churches- something that would shake the town- and also for the expected revival. He referred the meeting to, and read extracts from, 1 Sam 1:10-20; Jn 11:40 and 1 Jn 4:17.

11. Any other business Julian reminded the meeting of the requirement of the Solar Farm to donate £15,000 pa to organisations which were doing something for the community, which was something to be remembered in fundraising. He also advised that he has now been appointed Mayor. He plans to visit each of the churches on behalf of the Town Council and encouraged invitations to prevent gatecrashing!

12. Dates and venues of future meetings AGM Wednesday 21 May 2025 at the United Reformed Church at 7.30 pm

Wednesday 11 September at **St Michael's at 7.30 pm** [NOTE since the meeting this has had to be altered and the proposed date, subject to final approval, is now **Thursday 5 September**]

Wednesday 13 **November** at Elim Church. [NOTE since the meeting it has been ascertained that there may not be a building in which to meet in November, so the time, date and venue of this meeting is **tbc**].