**ST ANDREW’S PSALTER LANE CHURCH**

**Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on Sunday 15th April 2018**

1. **Prayers**: the meeting opened with prayer led by Rev Gareth Jones.

2. **Apologies** for absence were received from Jan and Alan Birch, Alison Gregg, Alastair and Rachel Morris, Anne Hollows, Sue Preston, Chris Lowry, Peter Mitchell.

3. **Approval of Minutes**: the Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting held on 2nd April 2017 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **Matters arising** from the Minutes:

John Harding asked about progress on the aims and objectives identified at the 2017 AwayDay: these were covered in the Minister’s report.

Chris Venables asked about the fundraising for the new Creation Window: this was covered in the Property & Finance report; John Cripps said the work on the window had been finished and the cost covered by the money raised by the appeal plus a bequest, with no deficit.

5. **Reports**: reports had been published in abbreviated form and given to the Meeting to all members at the meeting; full reports had been available for reference for 2 weeks before the Meeting. Reports were tabled except those that needed comment or clarification.

1. General Report on the Life of the Church: report tabled.
2. Church Membership report including Electoral Roll: report tabled.
3. Worship Planning Committee: report tabled.
4. Property and Finance Committee: reports tabled.

Finance: the audited accounts for the year ending 31 August 2017 were received. The Treasurer spoke to his report and summarised the church’s financial position. His points included:

* the surplus included a very generous donation of £10,000 from Horizon Methodist Church, some of which was to be used to install screens in the worship area
* Reserves were up to the required level
* the financial position of the church has been strengthened
* charitable giving has been reviewed and increased

The Treasurer answered a question from the floor on Donations: the figure had not changed so how has charitable giving increased? The amount is to be increased year-on-year; and we also give to a lot of charities in other ways.

It was proposed and seconded that the accounts be approved by the meeting, and that Hawsons be retained as examiners. **Carried Nem Con.**

A vote of thanks to the Treasurer was proposed and seconded. **Carried Nem Con**. The Treasurer thanked the Church Administrator.

Property: report tabled.

1. Church Links: report tabled.
2. Music: report tabled.
3. Interfaith Centre: report tabled.
4. Young SAPLC: report tabled.
5. Parent and Baby Group: report tabled.
6. Peace and Justice: report tabled.
7. Eco-Congregation: report tabled.
8. Fellowship Lunch: report tabled.
9. Ecclesall Deanery Synod: report tabled.
10. Circuit Meeting: report tabled.
11. Clifford School: report tabled.
12. St Andrew’s Hall: no report received.

David Body reported on the negotiations taking place with the Scout group, which managed the Hall, on the renewal of the lease. He hoped that this would be an opportunity to make the links with the organisations using the Hall stronger. It was important to ensure that the Hall was retained and used as a community asset. The Scouts had cleared snow from the front of church and Southcroft during the recent bad weather, which had been very much appreciated.

1. Uniformed organisations: no reports received. Chris Venables reported that all the organisations were flourishing. They appreciate the use of the Hall, and the Scout Group has put time and effort into managing the Hall and making it a good facility

6. **Minister’s report**: report tabled. Gareth Jones spoke to his report which had been conflated with the General Report on the Life of the Church (Item 5 a).

He wished to focus on just one thing – at the Awayday (19th March 2017) ten objectives had been identified, narrowed down to three on which we were focussing (some of the others would be covered by these):

Open Church - we experimented with keeping the church open during the week; very few people visited however, so the decision was taken only to continue with this on specific occasions.

Food Bank support – this led us to think about how we use are church garden.

Welcome/Openness to all – this is an ongoing process, and also links with our continuing reflections on what it means to be a church in which all people can feel welcome and at home, in keeping with our membership of the Inclusive Church network.

We wanted to be outward-looking as a church, and have many links to others - the Deanery and Diocese, Circuit and District, the Nether Edge Quakers and other faiths through the Shirley House Interfaith Centre. And we have seen this year a development of the Anglican Mission Partnership to which we belong.

Gareth stressed the importance of our regular Worship, which is at the heart of our activities and community involvement.

Gareth thanked everyone who had devoted time, energy and dedication to the whole life of the church. He thanked Rodney Godber for his years of service as Churchwarden.

Gareth explained how his own responsibilities had changed as they have every year - this year he had taken on pastoral charge of Highfield Trinity Methodist Church on London Road, and had become Co-Chair of the Sheffield Branch of the Council of Christians and Jews.

John Harding asked what we expected to do to meet AwayDay objectives. David Body replied that the ECC had discussed which steps to take, and will continue with these discussions. Having spent time deciding what it is not easy or straightforward for us to do, we should concentrate on what is practicable in the next year. Working within the Central Mission Partnership might help us find ways to achieve some of our objectives. John thought we should work towards another AwayDay 3 years after the last one to help us see what we have achieved, and that we should have a report on AwayDay outcomes to the Annual Church Meeting next year.

7. **Elections**.

1. Church Stewards and Wardens:

Church Stewards: Judith Loveman and Anne Hollows were re-elected as Stewards.

Church Wardens: Muriel Roberts was re-elected as Warden; no nomination for second warden had been received. John Booler asked whether the post could be shared between 2 people, and John Russell (a new Southcroft resident) said he had experience of being a warden and would be willing to help.

(Each Steward and Warden serves for 4 years from the date of first election)

1. Ecumenical Church Council

Clergy, Churchwardens, Stewards, members of Diocesan and Deanery Synods, a Circuit representative (Katrin Hackett), a Circuit Superintendent, Methodist Local Preachers, Anglican Readers and the Property Steward are ex-officio members; Methodist members can serve 6 years (but do not have to); all members are elected annually.

Nominations had been received for: Bill Atherton, David Body (Chair), John Booler, Caroline Cripps, Joseph Dey, Alison Gregg, Clare Loughridge, Janet Loughridge, Rachel Morris.

All nominees were declared elected.

8. **Joint Church Council**: The Joint Church Council is responsible for the Sharing Agreement on the church property.

The council consists of: Methodist: the Minister (or a Circuit Superintendent if the minister is Anglican), 2 Stewards and 3 members - currently Mary Kenward, Judith Roberts, Janet Evans; Anglican: the Incumbent (or Area Dean if the minister is Methodist), 2 Churchwardens and 3 members - currently David Body, Imogen Clout and Rodney Godber.

The point was made that Rodney Godber was on in 2 capacities, as Churchwarden and member. Since Rodney would no longer be a warden after this meeting this was not a problem.

9. Renewal of licence for Quakers’ use of Shirley House for Worship. The Chairman explained that it

had been agreed at the Annual Church Meeting in 2013 that the Quaker licence should be renewed

every year, and this was proposed and seconded. **Carried Nem Con.**

10. **Any Other Business:**

* Salvation Army: Janet Clarke asked whether we should be trying to build a relationship with the Salvation Army, as our near neighbours: Gareth had been trying to make contact, but changes in their leadership had made this difficult; but there is goodwill between the congregations.
* Harvest festival: Janet Clarke suggested raising money to fund simple solar power in Africa – to go on ECC Agenda.
* Joint Church Council: John Cripps pointed out that the JCC is also responsible for arrangements for Shirley House leases and St Andrew’s Hall.
* Junior Church: Barbara Booler expressed her concern about the complete lack of young people in church, and asked what had happened since our Children and Family Worker left. Imogen Clout replied that we had been unable to re-appoint Melissa Simmonds because we could not get the funding, and that we should think about whether we need a Children and Family Worker as we now have so few families with children who are part of the church and prepared to come to the 10.30 am service on Sundays; we have families who come to Sandcastles once a month at 9.15 am, but they are “semi-detached”. There was a rota for Junior Church, and always a lesson prepared but the demographic had changed. The congregation is always welcome to come to Sandcastles, and perhaps if more people came and were more welcoming to the Sandcastles families they would be more likely to come to our 10.30 am service.

Gareth said there was a special Sandcastles once a quarter which the congregation was invited to join – the next to be 13th May; there is also a 10.30am service that day. John Kenward suggested a compromise on time, for example 9.45 am, might be a way of getting everyone at the same service. Another speaker suggested holding services or events that fit in with the lifestyles of families with children, for example on Sunday afternoons or Messy Church.

David Body said this was something for discussion by ECC and Leadership Team.

11. **Concluding prayers**: the meeting closed with the Grace.