

# **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2010**

**Hayes Town Chapel  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

## **Welcome**

The welcome and opening greetings were given by Rev. David Williams, EFCC Committee Chairman.

## **Opening Devotional Address**

Rev. Chris Sinkinson, Minister Alderholt Congregational Church, gave the opening devotional address from Philippians ch 1.

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2009**

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 2nd May 2009 at Libanus Congregational Church were proposed by Mr Ralph Appleton (Keswick Congregational Church), seconded by Mr Steve Webster (Bulford Chapel) and agreed with 2 alterations – Financial Report 2008 seconder was Mr Stanley Haskew not Rev. Stanley Haskew and Committee Election Results, delete Beverley from Rochford Congregational Church.

## **General Secretary's Report**

This report was given by Rev. Mike Plant, EFCC General Secretary.

Rev. Mike Plant thanked Rev. David Williams for his support during the year as chairman of the Committee and also as Pastor of Canon Park Congregational Church, Middlesbrough.

Rev. Plant also expressed his thanks to Rev. Gwynne Evans, chairman of the Trust Board – noting the work of the Committee and the Trust Board often overlap.

Thanks expressed also to the office, Anthony Harrison and John Glover, for their hard work and support. Rev. Plant expressed concern as to the need to consider Risk Management in the office. The churches were asked to make it a matter for prayer.

Two areas were raised:

Ministry of Women in EFCC Churches – in response to a question Rev. Plant indicated that it was under consideration, Mr Steve Webster (Bulford Chapel) proposed that two women are appointed within EFCC to look at this area and report back. This was accepted as it was seen as an important part of the Fellowship.

EFCC Structures and Involvement in Outside Bodies – The Fellowship Trust, Rev. Plant indicated that this would be starting June/July 2010, Rev. Plant and Mr Harrison will be meeting FIEC folk in June, prayer support requested.

## **Trust Corporation Report**

The report was given by Rev. Gwynne Evans (Chairman).

Rev. Evans reported that it was in 1993 when the Trust Corporation was set up as a separate body from the committee. At that time it wasn't envisaged how the work would grow, opportunity to thank the Trustees for the work they put in.

Mr Brian Elwick (member of Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley) has become a Trustee, he has a good financial background.

Rev. Evans encouraged the churches to contribute to the work of the Fellowship to support the funds that are available.

Rev. Evans explained in more detail the work of The Fellowship Trust as mentioned in the General Secretary's report, highlighting the benefits in working together including financial.

Memorial Hall Fund – In response to a question Rev. Evans indicated that we currently receive £55000/year from the fund, decisions have been taken, by the Memorial Hall Fund Trustees, to share some of the assets (50%) with the interested parties (URC 70%, Congregational Federation 20% and EFCC 10%) this means that EFCC will receive their share (10%) in equities at the end of the year. The consequence of this is that the annual grant will be much reduced, will require much wisdom and discernment due to the changing situation. Noted funds also used to support the Congregational Library.

Rev. Evans closed saying how the Trustees value prayer support for their meetings.

## **Regional Secretaries' Reports**

Rev. Cyril Aston (Southern England and South Wales) sent in apologies, report taken as detailed in the Report Book.

Report by Rev. Bob Cotton (South-East England, East Anglia and London)

Woolwich – the church in a good state of health, good size congregation but small membership, noted that the Minister, Rev. A Flanagan, has had to take up secular employment.

Stanwell – The fellowship are pressing on as they seek a Pastor.

Norfolk – support base now down to Hingham, in response to a question Rev. Cotton indicated that East Dereham have joined the Congregational Federation and North Walsham have withdrawn from EFCC.

Rev. Mike Plant (Northern England, Midlands and North Wales and Northern Ireland) in addition to his General Secretaries report Rev. Plant reported regarding the situation in N Ireland, there are about 20 churches in the Congregational Union of Ireland. One area of concern shared is the burden that Rev. George Speers, (who spoke at the 2010 Studies Conference), and others have not just for Northern Ireland but also for Southern Ireland – there is some good work taking place in Southern Ireland – the fellowship encouraged to pray.

## **Ministerial Training**

The report was given by Rev. Bill Dyer (Training Officer)

EFCC have set up a Training Board – Revs Bill Dyer/Mike Plant/Peter Robinson/Neil Stewart.

Rev. Dyer drew attention to his report. There is a serious shortage of men coming forward, particularly from EFCC churches – similar situation with those in Bible Colleges/Training.

Training, Equipping And Mentoring – a leaflet has been circulated to all the churches, encouraged the churches to pray to the Lord of the harvest to raise up men. The churches requested to support with specific<sup>3</sup> giving for the work, other resources are limited. Mentoring – an important aspect, encouraging churches to have Assistant Ministers.

Must pray God's blessing and anointing, training is so key to equip as we are in a changing and challenging world.

Will need sacrifice, not just from the men but from the churches.

Bible colleges expect churches to be able to support a Minister, not always the case within EFCC hence the need for the larger churches to support smaller ones or for a group of smaller churches to have a shared Minister.

Rev. Dyer encouraged the churches to make use of the Training Board.

Rev. Dyer closed as he encouraged/challenged the churches to be spiritually vibrant and prayerful.

## **Financial Report 2009**

The chairman introduced Mr Jeremy Allison (Smailes Goldie – Auditors for EFCC) to the meeting.

First of all Mr Allison apologised to the meeting for the issue with the accounts (new sets available at the meeting), certain changes made following the Trustees meeting not followed through accurately.

Mr Allison went through the accounts for 2009, covering the work which is being done to restructure to release the restricted funds and also in moving funds from the General Purpose account to the Trust Corporation account. Moving forward with this and it is expected to be clearer by the end of this year.

A number of queries were raised and generally dealt with.

A query was raised with regard to title for EFCC, it states on the accounts "AN", it had been agreed some time ago to be "THE" – it was noted the Charity Commission need to be informed about this change before it can be changed on the accounts.

It was proposed by Rev. Neil Stewart (Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley), seconded by Mr James Price (Westminster Chapel) that the accounts should be accepted. The meeting agreed.

### **Appointment of Auditors**

It was proposed by Dr Digby James (Quinta Independent Evangelical Church, Weston Rhyn), seconded by Rev. Bill Dyer (Pontefract Congregational Church) and agreed that Smailes Goldie should be re-appointed as auditors for the forthcoming year.

### **Welcome of New Ministers**

The Chairman introduced Rev. Barnaby Alsop, new Minister of Bulkington Congregational Church, to the meeting and gave the right hand of fellowship on behalf The EFCC.

The Chairman then led in prayer.

New Ministers – Darran Dowey (Pontnewydd), Paul Bradley (Straid), Barnaby Alsop (Bulford), Keith Mitton (Thorpe Edge)

### **Constitution Amendment – Item 8 The Committee**

Paper previously circulated to the churches.

Keswick Congregational Church had requested a number of amendments to be brought to the meeting. Digby James on behalf of the Committee explained the background to the document presented to the meeting.

Ralph Appleton, representing Keswick Congregational Church, outlined the amendments the church are proposing to the document presented.

The meeting agreed to handle each amendment on an individual basis including the ones proposed by Keswick Congregational Church.

#### Amendment 1

Item a) – first paragraph replace The General Secretary of EFCC and the EFCC Office Manager with The General Secretary and the Office Manager of the Fellowship, fourth paragraph replace the EFCC Office Manager with the Office Manager of the Fellowship, fifth paragraph replace the EFCC Office Manager with the Office Manager of the Fellowship. The amendments on age and voting to be considered as separate amendments.

Item c) – the word “to” added to the sentence “The Vice-Chairman will be expected to become Chairman”, also to amend “the” to “The” in The EFCC Trust Corporation Ltd.

Item e) - replace the EFCC Office Manager with the Office Manager of the Fellowship

Proposed by Dr Digby James (Quinta Independent Evangelical Church) seconded by Mr George Falconer (Quinta Independent Evangelical Church) and agreed to accept the Constitution amendments for items a), c) and e) taking into account the amendments above.

## Amendment 2

Item a) paragraph five.

Keswick Congregational Church proposed a change of wording from:

No person receiving less than two thirds of the votes cast shall be deemed to be elected to:

Of the votes cast in respect of each person in the election at least two thirds of those votes must be in his favour for him to be deemed to be elected.

After discussion when it was raised that the original wording had been agreed at the 2008 AGM it was proposed by Mr Steve Webster (Bulford Chapel), seconded by

Rev. Johnny Huggins (Great Chesterford Congregational Church) and agreed that the original wording is maintained.

## Amendment 3

Item c) – It was proposed by Rev. Stan Hamberger, seconded by Rev. Neil Stewart and agreed to accept the proposed amendment.

## Amendment 4

Item h) – It was proposed by Rev. Peter Taylor (Nazeing Congregational Church), seconded by Rev. Neil Stewart (Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley) and agreed to accept the proposed amendment.

## Amendment 5

Item a) – Keswick Congregational Church proposed an amendment to delete the line “Persons over the age of 70 years at the time of the election will be ineligible to stand.” from the Constitution amendment being presented.

The amendment was proposed by Mr Ralph Appleton (Keswick Congregational Church), seconded by Mr D Johnson (Rochford Congregational Church), the representatives voted not to accept the amendment by 17 votes to 5.

The Constitution amendment on the paper previously circulated to the churches was proposed by Dr Digby James (Quinta Independent Evangelical Church), seconded by Mr Steve Webster (Bulford Chapel), the representatives voted to accept the amendment by 19 votes to 3 votes.

## Amendment 6

Item i) – It was proposed by Rev. Peter Taylor (Nazeing Congregational Church), seconded by Rev. Neil Stewart (Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley) and agreed to amend to read Committee and Sub-Committees (Sub-Committees being added).

## **Congregational Concern Report**

As presented by Rev. Peter Beale, Editor of Congregational Concern in the Report Book. Rev. Beale shared that it would be helpful if churches wanted to support CONCERN financially then to send gifts to the office marked CONCERN.

### **Prayer Concern Report**

This report was presented by Rev. Andrew Leach, Editor of Prayer Concern. Rev. Leach shared that since his report he had changed the format to help daily praying. Rev. Leach expressed thanks to Mr Russell Taylor for his work and support and also to Emmaus Bible School (printers). Rev. Leach emphasised the need to pray.

### **Missionary Advisory Council Report**

This report was presented by Rev. Peter Taylor, M.A.C. Chairman “God rules in the kingdom of men”, Rev. Taylor encouraged the fellowship to make use of the M.A.C. Prayer booklet, a letter has gone to the churches regarding this and only a few replies so far. The Council are aiming to revive the links with the Congregational Churches in Portugal and also the churches in Slovakia. Rev. Taylor informed that meeting that Mark Pickett from WEST College, previously a Missionary in India, will be speaking at the 2010 Ministers’ Prayer Conference.

### **World Evangelical Congregational Fellowship Report**

This report was given by Rev. David Saunders, WECF Member-at-Large. Rev. Saunders drew attention to his report and highlighted his time spent in India and Brazil, seeing the Lord at work. An area of concern is Portugal, with a lack of support and contact difficulties in Portugal financial support may have to be withdrawn at the end of the year. Rev. Saunders, as he closed, encouraged us to keep on praying. A word of thanks was conveyed to Rev. Saunders for all his hard work.

### **Church Reports**

The reports were introduced by Rev. Mike Plant

Rev. Jackie Brown, The People’s Hall, Bridgnorth – reported that the church had seen some growth, Praise the Lord. A group from Operation Mobilisation had joined them for a time – together with the church good work had been done including door-door visitation. Their young people were encouraged by being involved.

Rev. Chris Sinkinson, Alderholt Congregational Church – reported that the church had seen much growth with people converted, aim to be gospel people, evangelistic. Space has become an issue, worshipping in the hall as the church is not big enough – starting a building project. This means they

have to use the local school, which has given them opportunity to be more involved with the community.

Rev. Peter Taylor, Nazeing Congregational Church – reported that a work of God was taking place, much to Praise the Lord – seen conversions, numbers increasing. Prayer need that more people willing to pray.

Prayer followed.

### **Greetings from Visitors/ Greetings from EFCC Churches and Associated Organisations**

Greetings received from The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches and Affinity (Rev. R Underwood), WECF (Rev. B Jones), CCCC, USA (Rev. S Gammon), FCC, Australia (Rev. A Best), CCC, Canada (Rev. D Schrader),

Congregational Union of Ireland (Rev. V Neill), Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion (Mr D Sweetman).

Also a number of EFCC churches and individuals sent apologies and greetings.

### **Committee Election Results**

The Chairman informed the meeting of the results of the Committee Election. Those elected to the Committee were: Rev. Jackie Brown (The People's Hall, Bridgnorth), Rev. Bill Calder (St John's Congregational Church, Thornton Heath), Mr John Lodge (Hayes Town Chapel) and Mr Russell Taylor (Village Temple Congregational Church, Mynydd Isa).

The Chairman reported that Rev. Alan Millar (Wiveliscombe Congregational Church) had stepped down and Rev. Peter Beale (Bulkington Congregational Church) retired.

### **Closing Devotional Address**

Rev. Chris Sinkinson, Minister Alderholt Congregational Church, gave the closing devotional address from Philippians ch 3.

Please note that full copies of the reports given can be found in the 2010 Annual General Meeting Report Book which was sent to all ministers and churches within the Fellowship.