

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2013**

**The People's Hall Evangelical Church  
Friday/Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

### **Friday Representatives' Meeting**

#### **Welcome**

The welcome and opening greetings were given by Rev. Andrew Leach, EFCC Chairman.

#### **Opening Devotional Address**

Rev. Charles Collins, Minister of Connsbrook Avenue Congregational Church, Belfast, gave the opening devotional address from Ephesians 4.

Charles also brought greetings from the Congregational Union of Ireland.

#### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2012**

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 12th May 2012 at Nazeing Congregational Church were proposed by Rev. Bill Harrow (Marden Congregational Church) seconded by Dr Digby James Quinta Independent Evangelical Church and agreed.

#### **General Secretary's Report**

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

Mike reported that 2012 had been the most difficult year for him since becoming General Secretary due to some of the church issues.

In part he is beginning to slow down, to reduce the amount of travelling (important) and the need for him to be in his own church on a Sunday.

Wycliffe Independent Church, Sheffield – encouraging to see the church planting with a new work at Crystal Peaks.

Shared that Neil Stewart (formerly of Beverley) was settling well in Canada.

The situation with Peter Robinson was shared in that the call to Cyprus had been withdrawn, this has had a devastating effect on Peter and Angela who need to be upheld in prayer. Prayer was offered.

Mike shared on the meeting between The EFCC and The Congregational Federation representatives, it had been a useful meeting – frank, open, and in a good spirit.

Encouraged prayer for those who are Evangelical within the Congregational Federation.

WECF – with the departure of Neil Stewart and Peter Robinson prayer requested as we re-establish work with Bulgaria.

EFCC Structures – Mike referred to his report sharing that reviving churches is not the only way forward, EFCC also looking at church planting.

The Failure to Finance – emphasised the need again for churches to give to the work of The EFCC.

Thankful to the Lord for the Committee, the Trust Board and the Office.

Northern Region – Mike expressed his thanks to Martin Withers as he supports the Midlands group of Churches. Noted that Seacroft Congregational Church are meeting elsewhere as the building is unsafe.

Encouraging to see that a number of churches are calling Ministers.

In response to a question it was confirmed that Mike Plant will be taking a Sabbatical in 2014.

#### **Affirmation of Oneness**

Mike Plant drew attention to the letter previously circulated.

Mike confirmed that the meeting had previously approved the position papers which are included in the directory. These statements provide protection, the statement proposed to be added to the Affirmation of Oneness card as a means of flagging this up.

A question was raised that churches who affirmed Oneness and then had same sex marriages how would this effect the Oneness - it was confirmed that it would be void. It was proposed by Rev. David Saunders (Rochford Congregational Church), seconded by Rev. Bill Calder (St John's Congregational Church, Thornton Heath) and agreed to adopt option 1.

Agreed the office would try and establish when the position papers were adopted.

### **Committee Election Result**

The Chairman informed the meeting of the results of the Committee Election.

Those elected to the Committee were:

Rev. Barnaby Alsop Bulford Chapel,

Rev. Tom Brand Binfield Heath Congregational Church

Rev. Jackie Brown The People's Hall Evangelical Church Bridgnorth

Rev. Bill Calder St John's Congregational Church, Thornton Heath,

Rev. Phil Grove Tillingham Congregational Church,

Rev. Mark Ladds West Cliff Congregational Church, Whitby,

Mr Robert Neilson Pontefract Congregational Church,

Mr Russell Taylor Village Temple Congregational Church, Mynydd Isa

Prayer followed

### **Trust Corporation Report**

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

We record our thanks to Neil Stewart and Brian Elwick for their service on the Trust Board.

It was noted the work of the Trust Board is increasing, particular areas raised:

Woolwich – needs prayer, waiting for the planners to respond to an application to develop the land – also that the Minister had left the church.

Gt Haywood – again difficulties with the planners, prayer needed.

Dagenham – positive outcome with the re-negotiation of the lease of the buildings used by Osborne Partnership.

Ivybridge – The Trust Board are still managing the church, leased by Ivybridge Evangelical Baptist Church.

Gwynne Evans shared that the Trust Board are involved at present in purchasing property for retirement purposes.

Attention drawn to the number of grants/ gifts that have been made.

Emphasised the need for the churches to support the on-going work.

Insurance – reference was made to the need for Trust Churches to have re-instatement valuations done to ensure valuations are current. The Trust Board will help with the cost if there is a need. Also important to keep the buildings well maintained. Attention was drawn to the need for the electrics to be checked on a regular basis.

A question was raised that if the church wanted to change the Trust Deed then this would be through EFCC if the EFCC are Trustee.

### **Regional Secretaries' Reports**

#### **Report by Rev. Cyril Aston (Southern England and South Wales)**

Cyril emphasised the need to support Peter and Angela Robinson.

Wiveliscombe – noted the changes at this church with the Minister Alan Millar retiring at the end of May.

St Briavels – good news that Rev. Matthew Rees has been called, his induction will take place 7<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

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

Great Chesterford – Bob Cotton reported that the call had been given but as yet David Cham had not responded, Bob is in touch.

Hingham – since closure a New Frontiers group had contacted the Trust Board as they are looking to plant a church in Hingham – looking to lease the property on a 5 year basis.

Needs prayer.

Woolwich – concern that there is no leadership since the Minister Aaron Flanagan had left, the church are receiving help from the Slade Evangelical Church, Plumstead (Wes McNabb).

Dagenham – Praise God, 30 are attending. Pray for Minister Tom Hart.

Stanwell – encouraging growth.

### **Report by Rev. Mike Plant (Northern England and North Wales)**

Report previously given.

### **Training Officer Report**

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

Thank God for an encouraging year with men coming forward for training, also thank God for the privilege that we have a choice of good theological courses. Enough Colleges – there is a need for men to be called to the Ministry – needs the gift of the Holy Spirit. God's felt presence is missing. The need for the movement of the Holy Spirit, to be used by God to raise up men, to teach and equip them. Need revival, men in EFCC who have gone before encouraged a need to pray for revival, as we must do today – we have seen this in recent years in churches known to us. It is God himself we need, God the Holy Spirit bringing conviction/ conversion. Also to revive believers to live & testify to the Lord Jesus. Encourage fervent prayer, give God no rest in pleading with him.

Prayer followed.

### **Financial Report 2012**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Jeremy Allison (Smailes Goldie – Auditors for EFCC) to the meeting. He presented the accounts for 2012 making reference to his report, highlighting as he did last year that the General Purposes account expenditure is greater than the income - income includes monies coming in from Trust Corporation as a fee. The figures include the grant from the Trust Corporation to cover the 2011 shortfall. Deficit for 2012 £55000.00.

There had been an increase in the number of donors.

Trust Corporation accounts, as presented with accompanying notes.

A vote of thanks was given from the floor to the Trust Corporation for the work they are doing under Gwynne Evans chairmanship.

It was proposed by Rev Peter Beale (Bulkington Congregational Church), seconded by Mr Steve Webster (Bulford Chapel) that the accounts should be accepted. The meeting agreed.

### **Appointment of Auditors**

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

### **Congregational Concern Report**

The report (previously circulated) was presented by Rev. Peter Beale (editor).

Encouraging that Robert Neilson offered to take over as Editor.

The Chairman thanked Peter for his service to the Lord as Editor of Concern and presented him with a gift on behalf of the Fellowship.

### **Prayer Concern Report**

The report (previously circulated) was presented by Rev. Andrew Leach (editor). Andrew shared that it was encouraging that more churches contribute.

### **Missionary Advisory Council Report**

This report was presented by Rev. Peter Taylor, M.A.C. Committee Chairman.

Robert and Sue Lightowler – not called to work in Sierra Leone – they have been drawn to work on Human Trafficking in the UK. They are seeking to set up a home close to a church. Atanas Tihcev, Plovdiv, Bulgaria – looking to link up with an EFCC church.

Portugal - Daniel and Maria Calado, Paulo and Christina Nunes, Vanderli and Elena Carreiro, all are struggling with illness and need prayer support. There is a great need for men to be called from this country to serve in Portugal.

Philippines – Symphony and Nina Castillo, Peter Taylor will be visiting later in the year.

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

This report was presented by Rev. David Saunders – WECF Ambassador.

David highlighted the great needs around the world particularly Brazil and India – emphasising his personal commitment to the work. Encouraged that we should be partners with them.

David encouraged us to look at the World Vision Motto “let your heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God”.

### **SEMINARS**

The attendees broke up into 4 groups

Theme: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Seminar One: Affording the Future - the challenge of finance

Seminar Two: Who will Lead us in the Future? Providing leadership for our churches

Seminar Three: Future Hope for the World? The challenge of evangelism

Seminar Four:- Women’s seminar

### **Closing Devotions**

Rev. Paul Mallard (Midlands Gospel Partnership) gave the Friday evening closing devotion from Colossians 1.

Paul also brought greetings from the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.

### **Saturday Annual General Meeting**

#### **Opening Devotional Address**

Rev. Jackie Brown, Minister of The People’s Hall Evangelical Church, gave the opening devotional address from Acts 4

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

The Chairman shared with the meeting that greetings had been received yesterday from Charles Collins representing the Congregational Union of Ireland and Paul Mallard representing FIEC.

Greetings and apologies received from individuals and churches within the fellowship.

Written greetings received from The Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion (D Sweetman) and WECF (Alan Best).

Matthew Evans (Assistant to the Director) brought greetings on behalf of Affinity.

### **Welcome of New Ministers**

William Jervis (Hadhams Cross Congregational Church) – William shared that it is a small work, they are distributing the Good News Newspaper with some response. They have also done some work with children over the Easter period. Prayer that where 2 or 3 are gathered that Jesus is present.

Cyril Aston led in prayer

Trevor Jackson (Minister in Training – Wiveliscombe Congregational Church) – shared on the work at Wiveliscombe, noted that Alan Millar (Minister) due to retire at the end of May. Prayer requested for the future Ministry.

Alan Millar was able to share concerning his retirement to the Isle of Tiree.

David Williams led in prayer

Paul Thorpe (Mynydd Isa) – Paul shared how he had been saved by God's Word and the Holy Spirit – Praise the Lord. Paul was part of the Ministry team at Gwersyllt Congregational Church, then moved to work for Chester City Mission before been called to the Ministry at Mynydd Isa.

Bill Dyer led in prayer.

Mike Plant shared how encouraging it was with the number of new Ministers and read out a list of those unable to be with us.

Ed Collier – Sheffield, Wycliffe Independent Church

Wesley Ellis – Belfast, Albert Bridge Congregational Church

Kenneth Baird - Chinnor Congregational Church

Colin Haywood – Wheaton Aston, Zion Chapel

Chris Bishop – Alderholt Chapel

Jon Patterson - Alderholt Chapel

Ian Jones - Highbury Quadrant Congregational Church

Peter Mills – Pontefract Congregational Church

Dominic Stockford – Teddington, Christ Church - Associate Membership

Jonny Clifton – St Albans, Spicer Street Church

Steve Horton – Crystal Peaks – Church Plant, Sheffield, Wycliffe Independent Church

Andrew Leach led in prayer

### **Church Reports**

The reports were introduced by Rev. Bob Cotton.

West Cliff Congregational Church, Whitby – Minister Mark Ladds.

Mark shared in the time that he had been at Whitby there had been encouragements and discouragements. They were starting to see fruit for their labours, particularly amongst the mums from the Toddler group.

Bulford Chapel – Minister Barnaby Alsop.

Barnaby shared that there had been encouragements through the work with youth groups – they have an open house policy. The over 18 group – starting to build up friendships.

God is working – want to see more.

The People's Hall Evangelical Church, Bridgnorth – Minister Jackie Brown.

Jackie shared that the church had seen growth spiritually, the church had been reviewing the way they do things, needs prayer as they go through the changes – some practical.

Prayer as they reach out into the Community.

Prayer for Rob Childs, privilege to be involved with a young man called to the Ministry.

Jackie shared regarding the evangelism committee – they have received a request from Marden Congregational Church to help with a Holiday Bible Club late October.

Jackie is planning to have a training week (as was done in 2012), the aim to encourage young people to get involved with this, to train them up and for them to grow and develop.

Village Temple Congregational Church, Mynydd Isa – Secretary Mr Russell Taylor. Russell shared regarding the calling of Paul Thorpe to the Church. Also a new adventure with Coffee mornings – this has enabled contact with neighbours. There has been opportunities for Paul to meet with groups – pensioners club/ school assemblies.

Droylsden Independent Church – Mr Andrew Gilbertson. Andrew encouraged prayer for a Pastor.

A time of prayer followed.

### **Welcome of new Committee Chairman**

Rev. Bill Calder (Thornton Heath Congregational Church) was formally welcomed as the new Committee Chairman by Rev. Andrew Leach (Rochford Congregational Church), retiring Chairman.

### **Closing Devotional Address**

Rev. Bill Calder (Thornton Heath Congregational Church) gave the closing devotional address from Hebrews 11/12.

Please note that full copies of the reports given can be found in the 2013 Annual General Meeting Report Book which was sent to all Ministers and Churches within the Fellowship.