

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2014
Cannon Park Congregational Church
Saturday 10th May 2014**

Welcome

The welcome and opening greetings were given by Rev. Bill Calder, EFCC Chairman.

Opening Devotional Address

Rev. Richard Wigham, Minister of Hambleton Evangelical Church, Carlton Miniott, gave the opening devotional address from 1 Kings 19:1-18.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2013

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 10th and 11th May 2013 at The People's Hall Evangelical Church were proposed by Rev. Bill Harrow (Marden Congregational Church), seconded by Rev. Peter Taylor (Nazeing Congregational Church) and agreed.

Matters Arising

Position Papers – Mike Plant informed the meeting that the EFCC office has not established when they were adopted in previous years, the matter is being referred to the EFCC Committee.

Apologies concerning this situation conveyed to the meeting.

General Secretary's Report

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

Mike shared that the difficult situation with a church mentioned in his report is still ongoing, although it is an internal matter it has had wider implications.

Woolwich – it was noted that we still await planning permission, requested that the church is upheld in prayer concerning the future.

Sabbatical – Mike requested prayer for his sabbatical period as shared in his report.

2013 – Mike shared how he has been encouraged by the new Ministers who have joined EFCC churches and encouraged the churches to make it a matter of prayer for these men.

Mike welcomed Rev. Peter Robinson (Minister of Whitby Evangelical Church) to the meeting – prayer support was encouraged for Peter as he takes up his new Ministry at Whitby.

Mike shared concerning his plans to retire in 2019, fuller detail in the report.

Outside bodies – Mike focused on Affinity, they are in financial crisis at present with a lack of funds to pay salaries. As mentioned in the report gifts could be made from held funds to Affinity but really it would be good for churches to have input in supporting Affinity, the church giving to be matched by EFCC funds. It was shared that it would be good to have a response from the representatives concerning this proposal – there was little feedback from the representatives.

Mike said how helpful the Affinity Theological Conference was to him and others.

Bulgaria - Mike is in touch with the Bulgarian leadership regarding a visit towards the end of 2014. Mike shared how privileged we are as churches in our situations.

Memorial Hall – Mike drew attention to his report.

Ministers' Prayer Conference – as mentioned in his report close to outgrowing the facilities, it is a very worthwhile conference particularly last years. It will be good to establish links with like minded Ministers outside of EFCC which we are trying to do.

The chairman thanked Mike Plant for all his hard work during the past year.

Trust Corporation Report

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

It was noted that the Trust Corporation had been established for 20 years.

It was good to welcome Gilbert Stephenson onto the Trust Board, we are thankful to the Lord for the gifts we have within the Trust Board. Also Gwynne expressed thanks to Jeremy Allison as auditor and to the churches for their support, particularly with the insurance reinstatement valuations done in 2013.

It was shared the importance that churches need to arrange for the electrics to be checked every 5 years.

Gwynne drew attention to the investment advice available from Castlefield previously circulated to the churches – useful to the churches that hold funds.

Gwynne mentioned the support that is able to be given to retired Ministers and widows.

Gt Haywood – noted the recent contact we have had from the local council.

Gwynne conveyed his thanks to Anthony Harrison and David Smith in the EFCC office for the hard work they are doing. Also to Mike Plant for his support which is much appreciated.

The Chairman thanked Gwynne and the Trustees for all their work.

Regional Secretaries' Reports

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

St Briavels – Thank the Lord for sending Matt Rees to be their Minister, there have been encouragements despite the setback with the fire.

Lee Mill – again encouragement with David Legg being called to be their Minister, Cyril encouraged prayer for the previous Minister Cyril Short (and his wife Margaret) who still live in the area, particularly for his health and settling after Ministry.

Ogmore Vale – again encouragement with their Minister Owen Batstone, his main prayer is for someone to come and work alongside him.

Cyril shared it was a privilege to have Bill Dyer come to the South West to Minister/ Preach.

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

Woolwich – encouraged that a young man, Josh Fortune and his wife who is an African are keen to get involved, they have moved into the area – expected to be involved with the work for 6 months with a view to becoming a pastor.

Gt Chesterford – Bob is very involved, it is a church without leadership. Mark Plumb who lives in the area is involved with the church. The church have called Mark to be Pastor but he has not responded. Possibility Mark may have a 6 month probation period, he come from a different church background. Great potential, great possibilities.

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

Report previously given.

Training Board Report

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

Bill shared how pleasing and encouraging it was to have able people in training but not enough. The Training Board are there to support, the Trust Board are willing to support financially. The churches need to pray with hope, expecting, gospel driven. Do our young people's groups through the churches see a great need for God to raise men for the Ministry. To see that God is still powerful, Christianity is life changing.

A number of churches were quoted who in times past had seen the Lord work. Churches need to be aware of what the Lord has done in recent times – to sound out that God is able to do, to seek a visitation from the Lord.

History has shown that in the darkest days then God will still work.

Bill made reference to the home call of Stan Guest and Gordon Booth, highlighting their passion to pray, passion for men for the Ministry.

Let us settle for nothing less than calling upon God to visit our churches once again with mighty saving power, and to raise up many spirit-filled "gospel men" to train for the ministry

and for all of us to continue to attempt great things for God and to expect great things from God.

Financial Report 2013

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

Jeremy presented the accounts for 2013 making reference to his report, highlighting as he has done in previous years that the General Purposes account expenditure is greater than the income - income includes £65000 coming in from Trust Corporation as a Management fee. Currently looking at a method to stop the deficit getting greater each year.

Noted gift from Memorial Fund of £8500.00 – same as 2012. Also £4527 as restricted funds for the Philippines. Noted that the Ministerial and Church support now comes out of another account.

Breakdown of gifts noted as per report previously circulated.

Trust Corporation accounts, noted that work has been done in 2013 to close some of the accounts of closed churches. Increased rental income due to acquiring additional properties. Also noted the sale of properties in 2013.

Attention drawn to the realised and unrealised investments – with the help of Castlefield looking to generate higher income from the investments.

Jeremy closed by sharing how God had blessed the fellowship, encouraged to have a big vision for God's work.

It was proposed by Dr Digby James (Quinta Independent Evangelical Church), seconded by Mr Ken Foot (Keswick Congregational Church) that the accounts should be accepted. The meeting agreed.

Appointment of Auditors

It was proposed by Rev. Mark Ladds (Whitby Congregational Church), seconded by Rev. Andrew Leach (Rochford Congregational Church,) and agreed that Smailes Goldie should be re-appointed as auditors for the forthcoming year.

Evangelism Committee

Report by Rev. Bill Harrow (Chairman of the Committee).

Bill drew attention to his report, highlighting the team going to Torcross to do evangelism, also that EFCC are open to offer help to churches with their evangelism – encouraging the churches to have forward thinking.

Office Report

Brief report by Mr Anthony Harrison.

Anthony drew attention to his report and took the opportunity to thank the fellowship for their support for David and himself, the office is there to support and to serve the Fellowship, reminding the meeting the office meet for prayer at 9.30 am.

Also Anthony conveyed thanks to Mike Plant and Gwynne Evans for their continuing support.

Pastoral Care Report

Rev. Bill Calder (Chairman of the Committee) – Bill simply drew attention the report and the role of the Committee.

Teacher Training Report

Rev. Jackie Brown shared the there is a need for Ministers but the work starts at an early stage and drew the meetings attention to his report. Jackie encouraged the churches to get involved in “teacher” training, the EFCC have a team of trainers who are keen to help churches. This leads to promoting children's work within churches.

Welcome of New Ministers

Rev. Bill Calder drew attention to the number of New Ministers (detailed below). Rev. Iain Clements (Minister Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley) and Rev. David Levell (Minister Reeth Congregational Church) came to the front and were given the right hand of fellowship by Bill Calder on behalf of the Fellowship. Bill then led in prayer.

Rev. David Levell shared on the work at Reeth, noted only one “Dalesperson” attending, David encouraged prayer that God would work in the area. They are having an extensive re-build so the building can be better utilised to share the gospel.

New Ministers

David Legg – Lee Mill Congregational Church
David Levell – Reeth Congregational Church
Ian Cameron – Galmpton Congregational Church
Iain Clements – Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley
Matthew Rees – St Briavels Congregational Church

Congregational Concern Report

The Congregational Concern report (previously circulated) was taken as read, Mr Robert Neilson (editor) was unable to be with us.

Bill Calder led in prayer.

Prayer Concern Report

The report (previously circulated) was presented by Rev. Andrew Leach (editor). Andrew encouraged churches to contribute, in the last edition there were 28 pages with 25 churches contributing. Andrew conveyed his thanks to the office for printing Prayer Concern.

Missionary Advisory Council Report

This report was presented by Rev. Peter Taylor, M.A.C. Committee Chairman. Peter thanked those churches who had contributed to the relief needs in the Philippines following the Typhoon. Peter showed a slide presentation of the relief work being done by the National Association of Congregational Church and OMF. Prayer was encouraged for the Castillo family (NACC). Also for Paolo & Christina Nunes, Daniel & Maria Calado in Portugal – both couples have health issues.

Committee Election Result

The Chairman informed the meeting of the results of the Committee Election. Those elected to the Committee were:
Rev. Bill Harrow, Marden Congregational Church .
Rev. Keith Plant, Stony Stratford Evangelical Free Church.
Rev. David Williams, Cannon Park Congregational Church, Middlesbrough.

World Evangelical Congregational Fellowship Report

Reports previously circulated from Rev. David Saunders and Rev. Alan Best David Saunders sent his apologies.
Rev. Mike Plant gave the report. Mike shared that it was a delight to welcome two church groups into WECF – Myanmar and Samoa.
Mike drew attention to the reports noting the tremendous work done by David Saunders over many years, highlighting David’s strength of visiting and re-visiting churches to get to know the fellowships.

That is why Mike will be focusing on supporting the work in Macedonia over the next 5 years. Mike shared that between the churches there are differences in “status” - rich/poor, need to encourage EFCC churches to consider how we can be of support to the churches in Macedonia. A number of folk within the churches are 1st generation believers, there are no theological books and therefore a need for translation. Mike encouraged prayer support.

Church Reports

The reports were introduced by Rev. Mike Plant.

Morley Community Church – Rev. Steve Wright

Steve shared that the church are a “Mission” church, involved in a number of works with young and old – they are blessed to have church workers from overseas (2 will be with them next year), they have a yearly Mission with help from Capernwray students – contacts are being made. The church also run two camps – for senior and junior children/youth. Steve thanked the fellowship for their prayer support – praying for a “Coffee Bar” to keep contact with youngsters as they get older.

Ask more, expect more, rejoice more.

Latimer Congregational Church, Beverley – Rev. Iain Clements

Iain mentioned the Church Fellowship weekend planned for next weekend, opportunity for the fellowship to spend time together.

Mentioned the book The Trellis and the Vine looking at ministry within the church – develop training/ discipleship. Iain mentioned the church have many, many contacts through the weekly activities and also the evangelistic activities. Pray that as a church we can move this forward. The church is on the edge of a big housing estate – pray for opportunities to reach out into the estate.

A time of prayer followed.

Ladies Work/ Conference

Mrs Margaret Plant reported.

Margaret gave the background as reported and then focused on the Ladies Conference to be held 17/18 April 2015 speaker Ruth Eardley speaking on “Distinctly Different”, information is available for churches to take away with them and to make it known to the Ladies within their fellowships.

Margaret also drew attention to the Women’s Forum on the EFCC website – encouraged the Ladies to use.

Greetings from Visitors/ Greetings from EFCC Churches and Associated Organisations

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

Greetings had been received from The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (Rev. R Underwood), WECF (Barry Jones), Congregational Christian Churches in Canada (Rev. D Schrader), Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, USA (Rev. R Hamilton). Evangelical Churches Association, India (Rev. Jangkolam), Affinity (Rev. P Milsom), Congregational Union of Ireland (Rev. R McLarnin)

Prayer followed..

Closing Devotional Address

Rev. Bill Calder (Thornton Heath Congregational Church gave the closing devotional address from John ch 10.

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.