

Church Members Meeting Minutes

17th March 2024



WESTBOURNE PARK
BAPTIST CHURCH

30 Church Members were present. A number of friends joined the meeting. Apologies given were recorded in the attendance book.

LOVE GOD

Stu opened the meeting with a focus on the opening verses of Isaiah 60

The **minutes of the January 2024 Meeting** have been available on the church website. There were no **Matters Arising**.

Easter Programme: Stu informed Members that Easter week will take us on a journey to Easter Sunday, beginning with a communion service on Maundy Thursday. We will join the March of Witness on Good Friday following a time of refreshments and prayer at WPBC. Easter Sunday will start with Communion and Breakfast, followed by a Baptism Service, where 5 people – Celena, Grace, Jerry, Naomi, and Vassiliki - are going to be baptised. There is another baptism service planned for 19th May.

LOVE CHURCH

Church Membership: 3 people were proposed to the church to become church members. They were Nana and Deborah Amagyei, and Vasiliki Emmanouillidou. They have attended the Membership Class and met with Stu. Their profiles have been on the website for people to read. Each person was accepted into membership and will be received into membership next Sunday during the service.

Deacons Elections: Elizabeth provided an update on the Deacon’s Elections at our AGM on 12th May, with a reminder about the timing and process below.

Constitutional Requirement		Dates
List of eligible church members made public	Over 18; in membership over 1 year; meet biblical guidelines	17 th March
Announce during at least 3 Sunday Services		17 th March, 24 th March and 31 st March
Nominations received in writing	Deacon’s nominated by Members. Core Leaders by Core Leadership Team	By end of 7 th April
List of nominated people made public		14 th April
Announce during at least 3 Sunday Services		21 st April; 28 th April and 5 th May
Elections at a members meeting		12 th May 2024

50% of voting members have to vote	Leaders have to receive 2/3 of votes to be voted as a Core Leader/Elder or Deacon
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Clarification was asked regarding the roles and Biblical qualities being looked for in people standing for the role. It was acknowledged that it is a role people will grow into, with the basis being servant-hearted people demonstrating their spiritual walk.

LOVE PEOPLE

Outcomes of discussion on Small Groups: Stu reminded the meeting that Small Groups, which are launching in May, are being encouraged to support the church family to outwork the vision of the church. Plans have now been put in place and there will be a programme of weekly and monthly groups, some ongoing and some for a defined period of time. The programme for May to September consists of Men’s and Women’s Ministry, some Fellowship Groups that are continuing, the opportunity for new Fellowship Groups to start if anyone feels called to lead a group, some short programmes including the Bible Course, a book club and the CAP Money Coaching Course. Some specific groups, including a Health Professionals meeting will begin to form as well. There was discussion around tables and ideas for the focus for other groups were proposed. Questions were asked on how a Fellowship Group starts, and what the role of the group leader is. Stu will put together guidance in the form of a role description to support people exploring this.

LOVE God’s Resources

Reviewing our tithe allocation: Stu updated Members that in preparing the budget for 2024/2025, the tithe allocation was revised to 10% of the tithes and offering income, which means a reduced amount is given away of £10,000. This is to ensure we are tithing in a proportional way to our income. This has therefore meant a reduction in giving to some organisations, and others have been removed from our current list. We will continue to support BMS World Mission and BU Home Mission, both of which are non-negotiable due our commitment to the Baptist Union of Great Britain. We will reduce the giving to Wycliffe for Peter and Jennifer’s support incrementally over the next 2 years. And we will give £500 each to Open Doors, TearFund, Agape Centre and Westminster Street Pastors. When the Gift Aid return comes into the account we will tithe that, and use that money to support Margaya Fellowship in Sri Lanka, with 2 more years committed to them; Iranian Ministries through supporting Shahin and Ava to travel into church 2 Sundays per month to minister to the number of Iranians attending church and in the local community. We will also use some of the money to support Dave and Michele Mahon for their annual home assignment visit later in the year.

The full budget is being finalised by the Elders and then will be circulated to Church Members. People were invited to speak with the Elders if they have any questions or concerns when this is available. It will be brought to the Members Meeting on 12th May to be approved.

Any Other Business: The growth in the children’s and youth work was explained to the Members. This is a blessing and exciting, but also requires more leaders and helpers as there are a number of children with varying abilities and disabilities, both physical and in communication. Anyone who feels they could support this as a helper was asked to speak with Rebecca or Geoff Biggs. Also parents were reminded that after Sunday School has finished, they are responsible for their own children. They need to know where they are in the building and ensure their safeguarding and safety.

Closing Prayer: Abena closed the meeting with prayer.

Date of next meeting: Sunday 12th May 2024 – with light lunch and Annual General Meeting