

# Church Members Meeting Minutes

15<sup>th</sup> May 2022



WESTBOURNE PARK  
BAPTIST CHURCH

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

## LOVE GOD

Geoff opened the meeting with prayer. The minutes of the January 2022 Meeting have been available on the church website. No comments or changes were advised by those present

## LOVE CHURCH

**Church Leadership Structure:** Elizabeth updated the meeting that leadership elections were postponed for 6 months in November 2019 to allow time for a new leadership structure to be put into place. COVID, and then Jem's death impacted on us revisiting this in 2020. 2021 was time for us to grieve and rebalance. We now need to look at this as most leaders 3 year elected period has finished, with only Denese Forde being in an elected role. All leaders have continued to fulfil their commitment out of service to God and the church, which we are really grateful for. Some have stepped aside, including Hil Sewell, who has stood down from the Children's Ministry Coordinator role. Gratitude was expressed for their leadership over the years.

In January 2022 the Core Leadership met for prayer and discussion. We reviewed the past

January 2022 – Core Team thoughts and prayers. Reviewed past and agreed the following

- There have been unclear role descriptions
- Having a specific ministry role hasn't always allowed freedom for expression of the gifts of those elected.
- There has been a gap in meetings between coordinators/deacons and core leaders/elders over the last 2 years, so there has been limited modelling and training in wider church leadership.
- We need to increase the development and succession planning for future church leaders
- Elizabeth shared some thoughts on Rewilding the Church, or releasing people to be creative under God's direction, to provide freedom for God to work as He wants to.

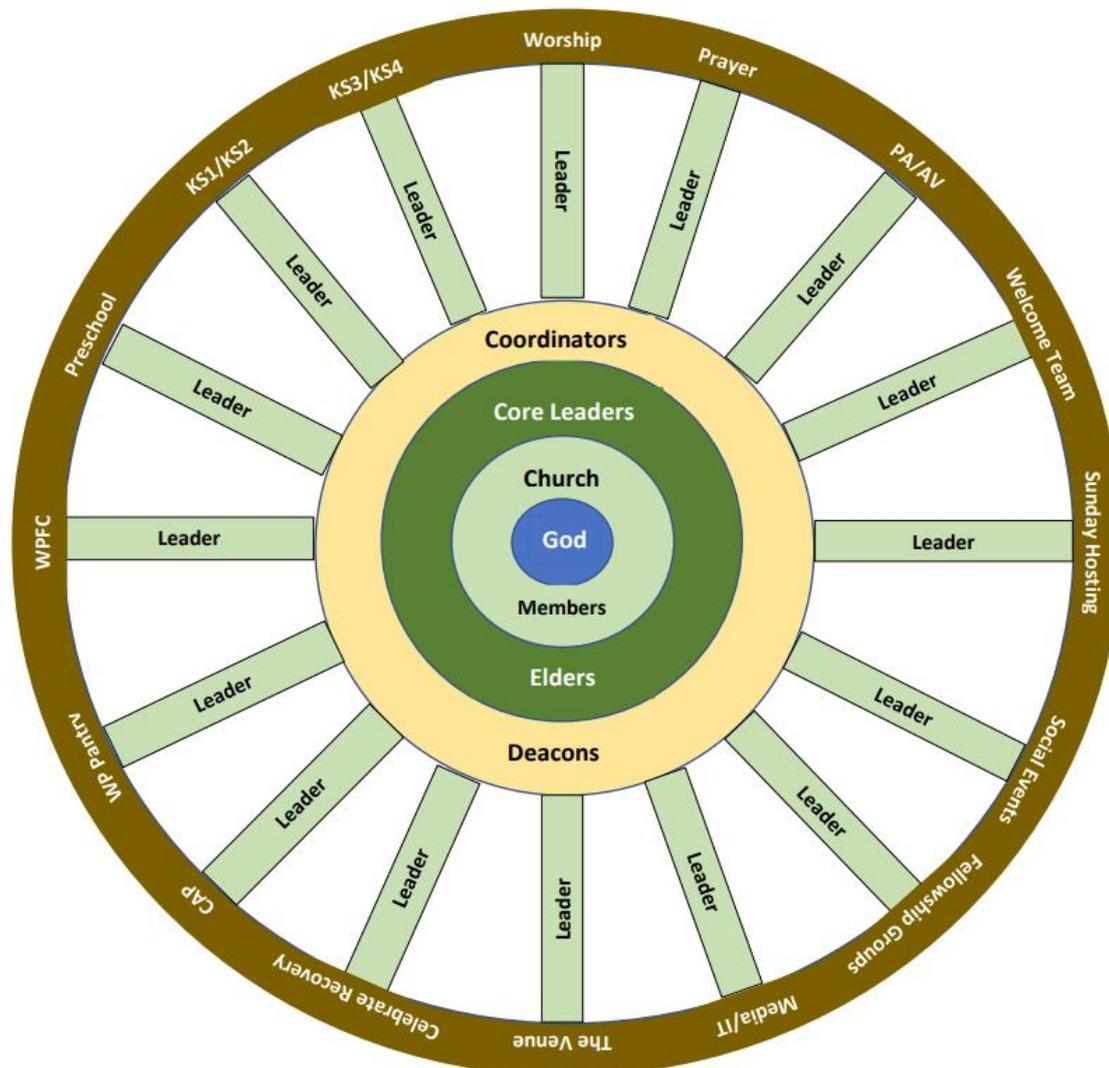
Following this review of WPBC situation, the Core Leaders propose the following new structure:

- Based on congregational model where Elders lead the church, with expectations on us from God and church members
- Deacons serve and assist elders
- Leaders, who are recognised but not elected, have the freedom to serve within their area of gifting without the pressure of an elected church leadership role. **The role is more important than the title.**
- Biblical guidance from 1 Timothy 3:1-13 was shared, which leaders need to reflect.

The proposal was provided with the following model, which is a Hub and Spoke model. Jesus is the Hub and all things are centred around Him. In the imagery of a wheel, the more power at the Hub means the wheel turns quicker.

The Membership is the decision making body of the church. Hany Abdelmassih, who preached last Sunday, provided a timely reminder that as church members we are not here to decide what we want to happen, but to discern God's will for what He wants to happen.

The Core Leaders or Elders (wording interchangeable or one use of word to be decided) inform and carry responsibility for the church under the guidance of the membership. A new / different Deacon Role would work alongside the Elders, being involved in the overall leadership of the church, with oversight in conjunction with the Elders of certain areas of church life. Non-elected leaders would run different ministries in the church, working in teams. The diagram is for illustrative purposes and could be amended and added to as church life and ministries change and grow. This allows for freedom and flexibility, as well as growth.



The proposal was presented for initial thoughts and will be discussed at the next members meeting. It would be good to plan towards elections for the autumn term. It was also suggested that these are staggered so that not all leaders are being elected at the same time in the future.

Questions raised:

- Can we clarify the core leader / elder terms? *Agreed they are being used interchangeably at the moment, but this can be reviewed as part of the discussions.*
- How can we get other people involved? *We will need to work up role descriptions, look to identify gifts of people and approach them to get them involved.*

**Church Membership Applications:** Abena updated the meeting that we have four applications for membership from Patricia Mabika, Chloe Umar, Emily Wang and Waitung Wu. They have all been visited, and all were recommended for membership. They will be received into membership at the next communion service on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Pastoral Vacancy Process:** Elizabeth updated the membership that a draft profile of the church has been sent to all church members. Some present had not received this, so it will be resent to those people. Some questions were raised, but overall it was felt to be representative of the church. It was agreed to pause until everyone has had chance to review and read the profile before sending it to London Baptists for the process to begin. The importance of prayer was highlighted, as this is one of the most significant decisions churches take.

**Children's Work Vision Afternoon:** Geoff updated the meeting on the Children's Work vision afternoon held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. As a result of a really positive afternoon, creche started in the Family room after Easter, with a new team of around 6 people running this. Key Stage 1 and 2 have an identified team of 3 leader and a group of helpers. More leaders are needed, and at least one person is shadowing for this role. Key Stage 3, young people up to age 14, is currently a smaller group, who are being supported by a team of 4 people. Key stage 4 are now serving the church through PA desk and children's work. There are more younger children, with a range of differing needs, that the team are seeking to meet.

## **LOVE PEOPLE**

**Queen's Platinum Jubilee Street Party:** Geoff updated on plans for a street party outside the church on 5<sup>th</sup> June. All homes in the street, and the flats above the church have received letters. The other churches meeting in the building have been invited, so it will be a shared event. Member's were encouraged to be there and get involved. Also prayer was requested for the weather and for opportunities to meet people and to share with them.

## **LOVE GOD'S RESOURCES**

**Church Budget 2022 / 2023:** Elizabeth presented the budget for this financial year, which has been delayed as we had to cancel the Member's Meeting in March. The budget has been circulated to the group who have scrutinised it in previous years. It can be sent to anyone else who requests it.

The budgeted income and expenditure is £228,552, which has been based on costs that we know from the last financial year, and costs so far with the building. Budgeted income from church member tithes and offerings has been left the same as last year, based on the current economic situation, and pressures on Member's personal budgets. The income has a target income from hiring out the building which is £124,000. This is needed to balance the budget. In 2021/2022 we had income totalling £88,000 from external renters. So we are stepping out in faith, and require prayer for this same level of income, plus an additional £36,000 in the coming months.

**Next Member's Meeting Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

Ken closed the meeting in prayer.