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**MINUTES: ANNUAL GENERAL CHURCH MEETING:**

**Sunday 22nd May 2022 at 11.45 a.m**

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| 1 | **Welcome**  Rev Andrew Prout (RAP) welcomed and thanked everyone for attending, especially those members attending for the first time. |
| 2 | **Apologies and Attendance Record**  **Those present:** Rev Andrew Prout (RAP), Sue Edwards, Napoleon Yorke-Andrews, Peggy Liffen, Rhian Roberts, Sheila Agyeman, Agnes Duah, Caroline Moody, Tony Moody, Maggie Dodd, Ruth Wallace, Peter Wallace, Gina Woodhead, Ros Hancock, Jan Kitchin, Chris Kitchin, Roy Vivian, Jackie Vivian, Tomas Cvrcek, Lesley Saunders, Evangeline Selvarajan, Pat Maziane, Freda Gray, Chris Ford, Gerry Livesey, Anne Wall, Joanna Rose, Eric Bridgstock, Val Parker, Joe Kitchenton, Val Parker, Justine Akowuah, James Appiah and Chris Hancock.  **Apologies were received from:**  Sue and Graham Danbury, Chris and Caroline Tough, Angela Spriggs, Hilary and Cliff Moore, Lianne Weidmann, Sue Davey, Colin Branch, Helen Jeffery, Noelene Browning.  **Andrew led the Opening Devotions / Appointed Scrutineers Joanna Rose and Gina woodhead** |
| 3 | **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20th June 2021**  The minutes were unanimously accepted as a true and correct record. |
| 4 | **Any Matters Arising (Not Appearing Elsewhere on the Agenda)**  None |
| 5 | **Remembrance of Members who have died since the last Annual General Meeting.**  The meeting remembered those people who have sadly died since the last AGM, in particular Helen Harris and most recently Eileen Holt and Sulo’s mother Rajamalar Vivekanathan. |
| 6 | **Election of Church Stewards and Representatives to the Church Council**  Out of the six current stewards, five have agreed to stand for another year as Joe Kinchenton will be moving away in September. The meeting was then asked to vote using the AGM Ballot paper which had been circulated to all church members. The five remaining stewards; Denise Willingham, Lianne Weidmann, Tomas Cvrcek, Angela Andrews and Noelene Browning all received a sufficient majority of votes to be re-elected, as were Ros Hancock, Caroline Tough, and James Appiah who serve as Representatives to the Church Council.  Chris Kitchin and Graham Danbury are both standing down from the Church Council having each served for many years and they will be missed. Thanks was given to both for their commitment. With immediate effect Tomas Cvrcek will take over as Senior Steward from Denise Willingham. Particular thanks were given to Denise, who having been a steward for 6 years and Senior Steward for the past four has led the team through a particularly difficult time resulting from the pandemic, and consequently her responsibilities have been far beyond what would normally be required.  It was also noted that although still in the Gambia and overseas for most of the pandemic, that Angela has remained in constant contact with RAP. She herself has experienced bereavement with the death of various people in her family but is hopeful to back at Hatfield Road as soon as she can be. |
| 7 | **Annual Report including Statement of Accounts 2020-21**  RAP highlighted how much the Annual Report shows the work that our Church does, both for its attendees but also the larger community. There is much to celebrate with our membership standing at just over 100 and shows how we have continued to worship unabated throughout the pandemic and he confirmed that it will be formerly adopted at the Church Council.  The latest statement of accounts shows the church is in a good financial position, despite the pandemic, and he particularly thanked those who had continued to contribute to the work of the church and circuit and their ongoing generosity. |
| 8 | **The Changing Face of the Circuit from September 1st 2022**  As previously noted, the circuit will be saying farewell in the Summer to Rev Rosemary Fletcher, Circuit Superintendent; Deacon Linda Kinchenton (Cornerstone and Welwyn/Hatfield), Rev Bruce Anderson (Welwyn/Hatfield) and Rev Ali Facey, formerly of St. John’s Potter’s Bar, who has already moved on. RAP is currently covering SJPB until a new appointee starts. There will be a farewell service for each at MRMC on July 17th at 6.30p.m and a collection for Rosemary will be organised if anyone would like to contribute.  From September we welcome Rev David Jebb as the new Circuit Superintendent who will be based at Potter’s Bar, covering Shenley and Radlett; Rev Rosemary Mutopo as a probationer covering Welwyn and Hatfield and Deacon Nigel Perrott who will have at least half of his time allocated to St Albans, covering HRMC, MRMC and the Cornerstone Project Salisbury Village. A welcome service will be held for them on Friday September 2nd at St John’s Potter’s Bar.  RAP also mentioned that his current appointment at HRMC is due to end in August 2023. He initially joined us for 5 years in 2014 and had already extended this by a further 4 years. He must now indicate whether he wants a further extension and would be grateful for all our prayers whilst he makes this decision. He also explained that the selection process for appointing ministers for the church would include some current HRMC members in addition to those who serve as Circuit Stewards. Of those who are Circuit Stewards these currently include Val Parker, Peter Wallace and John Scott. RAP underlined the huge amounts of their time they had given together with Chris Hancock both at church and at circuit level as part of the Circuit leadership Team.  It was also noted that Emma Williams, Children and Family Worker and her husband Callum are also moving on due to personal circumstances. The joint lay workers group between HRMC and MRMC are due to meet and discuss how to proceed with this role once Emma has gone. Furthermore, it is noted that a portion of the grant money for Emma’s appointment from the district and Joseph Rank Trust may have to be returned as the full length of the appointment has not been fulfilled. For those individuals who contributed it will then be up to them to decide whether they wish this money to be refunded and retained for the future. |
| 9 | **The Work and Mission of the Church**  Methodist Conference in 2021 had adopted a keynote report on Justice, Dignity and Solidarity. We must continue to debate and discuss these issues at HRMC, as we did with the subject of same sex marriage, to ensure that we continue to be seen to welcome everyone. In February the Church Council had voted to permit same sex marriages on its premises and was currently in the process of obtaining the necessary licence.  The way we work as a church has necessarily changed due to the pandemic. We are continuing for the time being to live-stream the morning service; the house groups have had to adapt; the café is now open but only twice a month because of fewer volunteers, and for the moment Brigade has been put on hold whilst its leaders consider its future viability. Other groups have had to revise the way they meet and consider in light of resource how often, but we should see this as an opportunity to be able to do something new. Now is also the time to assess how we have adapted. We want feedback from those who have used the live streamed services. How can we improve this experience?  Our aim to develop the church as an Eco-space (Using the Eco-Church template) has not progressed significantly since it was discussed last year. Some recycling boxes are in-situ, but the scheme needs to be expanded and the next step requires the Property and Finance committee to complete some forms that they have already received so that this can be pushed forward. It should be noted that we now have a much more efficient heating system and have been in the process of replacing all lights with an LED equivalent. It was also noted that sound panels have now been installed in the church hall at a cost of over £10,000. Not only do they blend completely into the hall ceiling, but they have had an immediate effect on softening the sound within that space. It is hoped that this will encourage those who have not felt comfortable to use the hall because of hearing difficulties to do so in the future. This is a further matter of welcome and inclusion. |
| 10 | **Any Other Business**  Q. Is the wearing of masks in the church going to continue? A. The Covid-19 Group is monitoring the ongoing level of the pandemic and it is most likely that this restriction will be lifted from the beginning of June.  Q. Can our reports and minutes from Church Meetings be published on the Church website as a matter of Public Record noting as a registered charity that we are required to be open and transparent? A. Annual Reports and Accounts are included on the charity website and ours are published and sent to them. It is therefore not necessary to include these on the Church Website although Minutes of Meetings could be added if desired. RAP will look into this.  Q. Should training be given on the use of the defibrillator? Yes, some training can be organised, but it does talk you through what you must do when in use.  Q. Should the access code for the defibrillator be shown on the door? A. No there is a phone number to call if you need to use it and the code is also displayed in the vestry. The ambulance service also has the code. We cannot display it for the public to see in order to prevent vandalism.  We need to utilise the space in the corridor for Church Council updates better.  The clock outside the church has stopped and does not reflect an active church. The property committee will investigate the problem and correct.  RAP thanked everyone for their attendance and made reference to the forthcoming Pentecost/Platinum Jubilee Celebrations |
| 11 | **Closing Devotions**  Closing devotions were held. |