

Rivington Unitarian & Free Christian Chapel
Congregational AGM 17.03.2019
Minutes

Those present: Alison Whitaker, Frank Ascroft, Dennis Crompton, Diane Fairclough, Paul Fairclough, Mary Horrocks, Peter Bearon, Judith Crompton, John Green, Michael Hough, Janet Lythgoe, Vince McCully, Geoff Newey, Iris Wharton, Rev Frank Williams, Carol Worsley

1 Welcome and Prayer: Alison Whitaker welcomed everyone to the meeting and Vince McCully said a short prayer.

2 Apologies: Linda Green, Marilyn Buckley, Chris Martin, June Martin

3 Minutes: The Minutes of the last AGM were circulated and accepted. Proposed: Mary Horrocks, seconded: John Green

4 Matters Arising: Judith Crompton had been appointed as Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

5 Chairman's Report:

AW reported that in 2018 there were three weddings, two naming ceremonies and two funerals.

Good weather during the weekend of the Rivington Spring Festival meant that the stalls were outside on the green. In Chapel, the Bennet Ladies Choir and The New Rosemere Singers provided musical entertainment and in the evening a performance of one of Chris Martin's 'Who Dunit' productions helped boost the money raised to just under £500. A further £376 was raised at the Heritage Open Day late summer fair and £150 at the Bay Horse Craft Fair. There have been plenty of visitors on Sundays when the Chapel has been open before services, and also during the Rivington Remembers exhibition weekends.

Over the summer the Chapel was used by a number of organisations for various events: The Unitarian Earth Spirit Network held a service of thanksgiving after the moorland fires on and around Winter Hill; NELUM (North East Lancs Unitarian Ministry) held their AGM here; the West Gallery choirs returned for their annual singing day; there was a 'coffee and cake' event organised in conjunction with Rivington Church which raised £180 for charity.

Road closures due to the fires meant that the cycling element of the Ironman event had to be diverted away from Rivington, so the Chapel was not open for visitors on that day. This year the event will take place on the 2nd Sunday in July, so there will be the usual services on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.

Representatives from the Chapel have attended meetings of the Winter Hill Fire Community Recovery Steering Group set up by Chorley Council to assess and monitor the impact of the fires on local residents and businesses.

Vince attended the GA Annual Meetings last April which he reported was an inspiring experience. This year's Meetings will run from Tues 16 to Thurs 18 April. AW will be attending as the Chapel's delegate, and Vince is going on behalf of MDA.

Once again the number of Chapel members has increased and now stands at 26. However, it was sad to lose a long standing member and supporter of the Chapel when Elsie Curwen died in November 2018.

The upstairs vestry still needs more work before it can be used as a meeting area, but significant progress has been made with clearing furniture and other items which are no longer needed. There are new curtains in the vestry, the kitchen and the alcove between the Chapel and the kitchen. A new water boiler has made the making of hot drinks much easier, and since last summer the after service refreshments have been very welcome.

During the autumn it was agreed that the Congregation would take over responsibility for the care of the Physic Garden. A lot of work has been done already to clear the two beds, and some working parties to start replanting will soon be organised, probably in early April.

AW thanked the Committee and members of the Congregation for their support over the last year.

6 Secretary's Report: VM reported that he had received tickets for an event in Chorley for charities to obtain information on available sources of funding. He had received a copy of a publication: 'We Are One, a manifesto for humanity'. Correspondence from the GA had been disseminated and displayed as appropriate.

7 Treasurer's Report: Income - £9,986.54. Expenditure - £8,941.46. Excess - £1,045.08. Assets stand at £40,818.99. The number of Rites of Passage bookings had been lower than the previous year. The significant increase in the surplus is largely due to the tax reclaimed from HMRC which now includes gift aid on the open collections taken in Chapel, and a generous donation from a Chapel member.

FA reported that the Trustees appeared to have made an overpayment of £50.70 on the amount outstanding on the loan for the heating system. As PB had only had a short time to examine the accounts due to recently returning from holiday, he had not been able to ascertain the reason for this. [Subsequent to the meeting, it was found that the sum was to cover the extra cost of printing the advertisement insert for the newsletter. The treasurer's report has been amended to show this as a separate item.]

8 Election of Officers: There was only one nomination for each of the posts of Chairman and Treasurer, so AW and FA remain in post.

Secretary: there were no nominations for secretary, so VM will remain as correspondence secretary and other secretarial duties will be carried out by members of the Committee as necessary.

9 Election of Committee: there were five nominations for the seven places on the Committee, so all those nominated were elected – Marilyn Buckley, Jacqueline Dagnall, Diane Fairclough, Paul Fairclough and Mary Horrocks.

At this point, VM was asked to leave the meeting.

10 Election of Lay Person in Charge: The motion was put that VM should remain as Lay Person in Charge. Proposed: Judith Crompton, seconded: Diane Fairclough. Carried unanimously.

VM returned to the meeting and was informed of the Congregation's decision.

11 Events: The Rivington Village Festival will be on Saturday 11 May. There will be stalls on the Green as last year. The Parish Hall has been booked in case of bad weather if not. AW asked members who are intending to run a stall to let the Committee know in advance so that space can be allocated.

The Anniversary Sermons will be on Sunday 19 May. AW asked if people would like to have a Congregational meal afterwards. This was agreed, so the Committee will make the necessary arrangements.

The Walt Whitman Bicentenary Commemoration takes place on Sunday 2 June. The Service will be taken by Judith Crompton. Due to the numbers likely to attend, it has been decided to move the Strawberry Tea to Sunday 16 June. AW will notify people of the change on the next newsletter.

There will be a fundraising concert on Friday 5 July when One Accord will perform.

The Triennial Pilgrimage will be on Saturday 28 September. The booking of the Parish Hall for the meal has been confirmed. Rev Celia Cartwright, who will be GA President by then, will propose the toast, and Rev Danny Crosby will take the service. Details will appear in the next newsletter. AW pointed out that we need to organise more help from Chapel members for setting up the Parish Hall and clearing away afterwards.

12 A.O.B. Rev Frank Williams asked that his title should be used.

PB suggested that some form of refreshments should be provided at the Walt Whitman Bicentenary Commemoration, possibly a glass of wine as this would be easier to organise than large numbers of cups of tea. Glasses could be hired. The Committee will look at the possibilities.

A presentation was made to Dennis Crompton, who has decided to retire from the Committee. He has been a member since 2005, but was also on the Committee between 1991 and 1998, so his combined service is over 20 years. His roles have included Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Minutes Secretary, delegate to the GA meetings and the MDA, Chapel keeper and Publicity Officer. Dennis will continue to act as our Publicity Officer.

AW announced that Jacqueline Dagnall has also served on the Committee for 20 years. As she was not present at the meeting, her presentation will take place on a suitable date in the near future.

13 Date of Next AGM: Sunday 15 March 2020