

MINUTES OF THE CHURCH MEETING TUESDAY 17TH MARCH 2026 (AGM)

Present

Members: 17

Non-members: 2

Apologies: 14

1 Welcome and Devotion

Reverend Elsie Fraser opened the meeting with a reading from Psalm 111. This was followed by the hymn How Great Thou Art.

2 Apologies and Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed as correct and signed from the previous meeting.

3 Matters Arising

Elsie gave thanks for God's provision, and all God has been doing since we last met. Most of the matters arising will be addressed via other agenda items or on AOB.

It was mentioned that the Agenda for the Meeting does not say the year, which could cause confusion in future years, so this will be included from now on.

4 Membership and Pastoral Matters

Elsie gave thanks for those who have recently started to attend our church and prayed for those in our fellowship who are struggling with poor health. She asked that we also pray for people willing to fill the gaps we have in some areas of ministry.

Requests for membership have been received from Rob and Sandi Hobbs. Margaret and David Ballard visited them to discuss this, and all voted in favour of them becoming members.

Janet and Hilary went to see Amanda Jenkins and all voted in favour of her membership.

Jean Barden was visited by Tony and Zarina, who's statement was read out by Pam Graham and all were in favour of her membership.

Following Sandra's resignation as Church Secretary due to health challenges, Sandra was presented with gifts and a card from everyone to thank her for her service.

Tracy Houchin was nominated as Church Secretary by Graham Falgate and seconded by Tony Salt. A vote was conducted by ballot, with Abigail Bottrill and Christine Martindale collecting and counting votes. Tracy was confirmed as new Secretary.

Approval of revised Office Holders of church was all approved, but with the following amendments:

- The Gift Aid Secretary is now vacant

- Data Protection Officer is also vacant and to be included on the Office Holders list
- Church Secretary – now changed to Tracy Houchin

5 Ministry Reports

Elsie gave thanks for all those who volunteer in various capacities and prayed for God's various capacities and God's vision and provision as we reach out to the community. All reports were sent to members and opportunity to ask questions or comment was given.

- **Church Secretary**

No additional questions and Tracy Houchin will now take on this role.

- **Tranquility Café**

Graham agreed that it is an amazing success. Anyone wanting to volunteer to do a talk, speak to Tony. Abigail said that as an outsider to the church, she sees how much it has grown since she has been working away. Elsie gave thanks to Tony and Pam for all her work behind the scenes. Sandra asked to thank Maggie and Amanda for their help in supporting Tranquility Café with all their crafts.

- **Social Care Committee**

Anyone else who would like to be involved in this to talk to Janet or Zarina.

- **Fabric Report**

May Bottrill raised concerns about the blue notice board at the front of the church, which is gradually rusting and needs replacing. But also said that she had raised this with Paul and David and was sure that it was in hand.

David reported that the guttering is leaking into the school, but that over 25 tennis balls had been blocking them. There are sections of the guttering that cannot be accessed safely. Also, the fan Lights also need washing and cleaning.

Tony had noted prior to the meeting that it was not the telephone system but the internet provided that had changed.

- **Ministry Report**

Graham feels it has been a good year for the church with Elsie being our minister.

- **Safeguarding Report (Graham and Maggie)**

On the 21st September 2025 the new Safeguarding Policy was approved. A summary of that policy is pinned on the left of the service hatch in the hall and a full version on the website. Graham proposed an edit to the policy as follows:

The church is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and adults at risk. When visiting members of the church community in their own homes those visiting on behalf of the church should, whenever possible, inform a member of the church social care committee of the date and time of the visit and provide the name(s) of the person being visited. All members of the church social care

committee to receive a copy of the church safeguarding policy and be familiar with its contents and requirements.

Members of the church community are asked to avoid phoning or texting each other and the minister on church related business between the hours of 9.00pm and 9.00am, unless in an emergency.

This amendment was approved by all.

6 Safeguarding (Graham Falgate)

Elsie prayed that our church will be a place where we all will feel safe and secure. She gave thanks to Maggie and Graham for all their hard work this year. Graham is covering both the DPS and DPS Trustee due to the small number in our church. DBS checkers are Elsie and Tony.

The members were shown a Level 1 Safeguarding Training Video.

7 Treasurers Report (Report from Janet Aukett)

Elsie gave thanks to God for his financial provision for our church and prayed that we would use the resources we have wisely.

Accounts and all the notes for them are on the website.

An independent examiners report was signed off for the accounts, but the church needs to sign them off. January and February 2026 report are not on the website yet. All Accounts approved.

It is quite urgent that someone take over the Gift Aid role from Christine. This involves preparing the submissions twice a year, but it is quite flexible. If anyone is interested, talk to Janet or Elsie.

8 Room Bookings

Elsie prayed for wisdom to use the space we have fairly and prayed for safety for all who use our building.

Anyone who wants to view the room booking calendar can ask Tracy for access to the online calendar as we no longer use a paper calendar for bookings.

Requests for storage space and noticeboards.

Anyone who has anything stored, please label it so that it does not get removed during the church clear out. All are welcome to come to help on the clear up days. (9th & 10th April)

Notice boards. The one by the hall door is for general community use. The one by the serving hatch is for church notices. The board by the stairs will be – half Daniel's Den and the other half can be for general regular group users to use, with the caveat that the church can remove any items deemed inappropriate.

All agreed.

9 A.O.B.

Church Picnic during the summer – Paul suggested that we could have a service followed by the picnic and do it on a Sunday. Sandi and Rob have agreed to allow us to use the YWAM premises. Marie suggested people coming from church may need lifts to the venue after the service. It was suggested that we all take our own sandwiches, plus a few spares to share. It was agreed that we can invite friends and neighbours. Elsie will make the necessary arrangements. Janet said that the Strawberry Tea is also open to friends and neighbours.

Lynne Green (General Secretary of the Baptist Union) will be sharing at our Violet Hedger Centenary service on 11th October 2026. As other churches are likely to want to join us to celebrate this special event, we have been asked if we could have this service at 3pm with tea following it. As it would be too much to ask the congregation to come to both services, it was agreed by all that on that day we would have our service at 3pm rather than 10.30am.

Easter is on the 1st Sunday of the month this year. We agreed we would have communion at the breakfast and the 10.30am service would be an Easter Celebration. Amanda, Rob, Sandi, and Jean will be welcomed into membership at that communion service.

The risk assessment has been done and is on it is on the website – all were asked to familiarise themselves with it. This document will be reviewed regularly.

Tony has secured some funding to be used to redecorate the Prayer Room. It was proposed that the floor level box cupboards will be taken out and the room to be redecorated. This will give more space to have sofas/soft furnishing. In principle all were happy but Sheila commented they do use that room when they are doing catering and use the surface of storage boxes as additional space. It was suggested on those occasions, a table could be put in there to offset the missing surface space.

Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 17th June at 7.00pm

Future Meetings: Wednesday 23rd September at 7.00pm
Sunday 6th December after morning service
Sunday 14th March 2027 (AGM & Meeting) after morning service

Signature —————

Date —————