

Mount Elim Evangelical Church, Pontardawe
AGM Members' Meeting
Wednesday, 17 March 2021 at 7:00pm

The meeting was held on Zoom. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance all attendees could see and hear each other at all times.

Present:, Sue Bradley, Paul Clement, Jayne Clement, Elisabeth Clement, Denise Davies, Babs Dewitt, Joseph & Gwenllian Dooher, Tony Epps, Ken Evans, Jill Heggarty, Caroline Jones, Steffan & Cath Jones, Dilys Milton, Victoria Porter, Samantha Sandry, David Sercombe, Pete & Pat Smith, Alan & Kerry Thomas, Glynis Tierney (23)

Apologies/ Not Present: Kathleen Barker, Caryl Evans, Kath Hamm, Gaynor Hughes, Kayleigh Jones, Stefan & Anni Panov, Dan Sandry, Dawn Williams (9)

Dorothy Wonnacott is no longer a member having moved to Neath and joined Neath Abbey church.

Tony Epps was welcomed as a new member for the first time.

28.1 Devotions:

Steffan expounded on Hebrews chapter 10 versus 23 – 31 and encouraged us to '*remember what you felt like at first*' when we first came to faith, We should use this to remember how good God has been to us in the past and to help us in the face of persecution for our faith in whatever circumstance this may appear as we can stand side by side as God's people.

28.2 Minutes of 11 November 2020:

These were proposed by Kerry, seconded by Samantha and carried. Steffan will sign.

28.3 Matters Arising:

No Matters arising.

28.4 New Member

Tony Epps was welcomed as a new member. He will be welcomed more formally at our first communion service back in church when we will all meet together.

28.5 Pastor's Report:

(a) General Comments

We are now 1 year into lockdown due to the Covid pandemic and it is a year since we closed Mount Elim as a safety precaution and on government advice.

Steffan has been very grateful for the members' patience, flexibility and Godly response to Covid which has seen a prayerful spirit within the church, a unity through all the different changes and challenges, and a care shown for one another.

He also expressed his thanks to the Elders and the support and encouragement they have provided along with the support of many of the members to enable nearly all of the regular church activities to continue to operate in a meaningful manner over this difficult time. He thanked Pete for so ably stepping in on many occasions for prayer meetings and Sunday Zoom services as well as Pat for taking on Zoom Sunday School and continuing with the ladies Thursday meetings.

He also thanked Cath for the many children's talks she has prepared and for her, Gwenllian, Caroline and Paul Davies for all the work with the children and youth.

We have also seen many people contribute to videos for the children's talks and this has been a great encouragement.

Steffan's working arrangements have seen all permutations within his household over the past year with both Cath and the children sometimes home, sometimes in school, all at differing times and periods. This has been challenging to adapt to and often has come at short notice.

(b) Encouragements

i. It has been good to see new people attend both the Zoom meetings and church. They could be categorised as:

- a. Restored Christians: [REDACTED]
- b. Christians looking for guidance or a new home: [REDACTED]

c. People looking for spiritual help: [REDACTED]

ii. New contacts made with other churches:

- a. The Baptist Convention of New England, Vermont, wish to link with non city churches in the UK and through Ian Parry have made contact with Steffan.
- b. Through hearing Steffan's services on Youtube the Teresa Mission in Kenya have been in touch. There seems to be much that we can learn and offer each other.

(c) Concerns

i. [REDACTED]

ii. [REDACTED]

iii. [REDACTED]

iv. [REDACTED]

v. [REDACTED]

vi. [REDACTED]

vii. [REDACTED]

viii. We are also mindful of people who have been affected by the pandemic due to its constrictive rules on movement making it difficult to see family and friends. This has been difficult for everyone but very painful for [REDACTED] due to their circumstances.

28.6 Church Department Reports

See attached reports

Steffan thanked all the people involved in all the areas of the churches ministry and how they have maintained their work during this challenging time.

28.7 Church Life in Lockdown and Outreach Opportunities

Our current pattern of services and meetings are as follows:

- Two Sunday morning worship services are required due to the numbers which have to be restricted due to Social distancing rules. These are at 10:00am and 11:30am.
- Sunday School 9:30am over Zoom
- Sunday evening service at 6:00pm over Zoom
- Communion service once a month on Sunday evening at 6:00pm over Zoom
- Sunday School Youth class 11:00am in church
- Tuesday Youth groups in the evening over Zoom
- Wednesday evening prayer meeting at 7:00pm over Zoom
- Thursday ladies meeting in the morning every alternate week over Zoom
- Busy Bees have not been able to meet but have maintained links through their own WahtsApp group

This pattern will continue until restrictions are eased and we can all meet together as one church in the building.

The Zoom meetings have given great encouragement to those who find it difficult to get to church, even in normal times, as they can now attend. Also it has given us the opportunity to invite speakers from all over the world and also to invite friends to services regardless of location. It has also opened up the opportunity for us to attend other churches meetings especially when guest speakers have been invited.

We have heard speakers from as far away as New Zealand and had speakers as well known as John Lennox and Tim Farron.

Opportunities include:

- Giving Easter tracts to our neighbours and friends.
- Using the 'home' time to communicate more with our neighbours and to encourage them to ask about our faith. Also to pray for them.
- Develop relationships with the new people who are attending church.

28.8 Looking to the Future

The following events are planned:

- 27th March, Easter afternoon tea on Zoom hosted by Caroline and Charlotte at 5:30pm.
- EMW Easter camp during the first week of the Easter holidays – Steffan to provide details.
- Good Friday Service with Steve Levy at 10:30am over Zoom.
- Easter Day services as per the usual Sunday with a communion in the evening service.

- 11th April Paul Daniel will preach in church.
- 28th April Joan and Maged Drotá are invited to our prayer meeting.
- In the autumn we will invite Hannah Coggins who works for AIM in Chad to speak at one of our prayer meetings.
- Restrictions permitting we will organise either a trip to Tenby or a day at Treffeca in September.

Next year, 2022, Mount Elim will be 40 years old. Ian Parry, a former pastor, will be invited to help us celebrate. Arrangements for the weekend will be planned over the coming months.

28.9 Practical Matters

- Steffan has been very grateful for the help in organising and cleaning the church during this period to ensure everyone is safe as regards the COVID virus.
- The stream behind church flooded during the heavy rain. We have contacted the Council who cleared the culvert and have advised that we keep it clear. Steffan will look to purchase a mesh for the entrance to the culvert and Alan will organise a working party to deepen and widen the channel.
- [REDACTED] a new person who has moved to the area, has asked if anyone can help with some simple DIY tasks. If people volunteer they must ensure that Covid Social distancing rules are kept.

28.10 Building Project

Planning permission was due to be finalised by the end of November. The following actions have taken place:

- Steffan wrote a note which was pushed through the doors of all the neighbours to invite them to discuss any concerns they may have with the plans. No one took us up on the invitation.
- The Highways department requested that we perform a Road Safety Audit on the Brecon Road junction. This we arranged and have amended the plans on three occasions subsequently following meetings with the Council.
- The Council, just last week, requested we do a speed check analysis on the new entrance to the church on Coedcae to ensure the visibility splays are sufficient. This will be concluded on 20th March.
- The revised plans have been sent out again for a further 14 day consultation which was due to be completed on the 12th March. We have not heard the result of this to date.

The sale of Mount Elim has been agreed in principle to [REDACTED] This will be subject to both parties obtaining planning permission for their projects and will have a clause to enable us to continue to use Mount Elim, at a charge, for 6 months after the sale has been concluded.

28.11 Financial Report

Alan presented the audited accounts which included:

- Balance sheet for all accounts
- Profit and Loss for main Current account

- Profit and Loss for the Building Account

These were accepted by the meeting. See attached sheets.

Alan thanked Dyfrig Griffiths for performing the audit especially in these difficult circumstances of the Covid restrictions.

The giving has been a blessing over this period and people have maintained their contributions despite the situation where employment is uncertain and the future unknown. Many have switched to Standing Order due to the difficulty of physically giving money and also the difficulty of getting to the banks whose opening times and service is limited. This has been a good move generally stabilising the frequency of giving.

New people have also been a blessing often asking how they are able to give.

It was noted that the Building account had spent £12,000 last year and yet had an income of £14,000. Alan thanked those who have been giving so faithfully on a monthly basis to maintain this account and also the larger donations that have been received. God has blessed us in many ways.

28.12 AOB

None

28.13 Prayer

The meeting ended with prayer and was closed at 9:05pm.

Annual Report

AGM March 2021

1. Sunday Schools

Junior Groups: The Junior Sunday School has continued on Zoom since September 2020 (note: with thanks to Pat for volunteering to do this every week). This has usually taken place early on the Sunday morning at 9am or 9.30am. Before Christmas we looked at some Old Testament stories including Solomon and a series on the life of David. We also thought about John the Baptist and the early life of Jesus, plus thinking about Harvest and the events surrounding the first Christmas. This year we have gone back to using our normal workbooks and have been following a series on the Ten Commandments before looking at the Easter story. I would like to take this opportunity to say how good the children have been at coping with this form of teaching. They have been attentive and responsive and it has been a pleasure to teach them. The parents have also been very good as they have had to spend time helping their children or grandchildren with the activities. **(Pat)**

Senior Group: There are now five regulars - Ioan, Trayan, William, Raya and Dewi – and we have met on Zoom during the lockdowns; and at 10.50am, between the morning services, when the church has been open. Gwenllian and I take the sessions. Caroline stepped down this year after many years of service and we are grateful for her hard work during that time. Using 'TnT' resources by Christian Focus we have looked at the 7 'I am' sayings of Jesus and the life of Joseph. We enjoy the lessons and are glad to see them listening well and starting to engage more in discussion. Zoom has actually helped. Please pray that God will give us wisdom. The children are at an impressionable age and we pray that God will use us to speak into their hearts and that they might all be saved. **(Cath)**

2. Busy Bees

Since lock down last March we have had some outdoor meetings and some online meetings over Zoom. We have mainly kept in touch via a WhatsApp group where we have shared some videos of stories and songs and given encouragement to one another. Until restrictions are lifted we are unable to meet physically, but hopefully we might be able to meet on the lawn or go for short walks in the coming months.

Going forward, from September, I will only be able to attend every other week due to family commitments. We would appreciate prayer and wisdom as to the best way to accommodate the continuation of Busy Bees, confident that God has always led and provided for the group in the past **(Kerry)**

3. Children and Young People

Apart from a few weeks in the autumn, **Clwb Ponty** has continued to meet on Zoom. About 10 children meet every week and we are grateful to Paul Davies for his continued help, as well as Victoria and Cath. This year we have been looking at important figures from church history, using 'Everyone a child should know' by the Good Book Company as a guide. After Easter we will be doing 'Epic Explorers', which is a children's version of Christianity Explored. We are encouraged by the group, however it is noticeable that we are having fewer children from non-church families and fewer opportunities to make contact with new families. We are hoping that the loosening of lockdown will enable us to start inviting friends and neighbours to Clwb again. **(Steffan)**

At present there are around ten of us in **Impact Youth** on Zoom. We have a time of news and prayer, a talk and then a game. At present we are studying the Gospel of Matthew, using a guide called “Dig into Matthew” by 10ofthose.com. We are hoping next term to continue with this and also to answer questions that often come up about the Christian life in general. Paul Davies and I have been very encouraged with our new younger members who have joined us from Clwb Ponty, they have settled in well despite present restrictions. We met at Mount Elim for a few weeks back in the autumn and we are looking forward to meeting again in person, although Zoom has been a great blessing because we can meet with old friends, namely Owain and Rhiannon Clark! Please continue to pray that each child will come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ (**Caroline**)

4. Prayer Meetings

It is so important that prayer remains at the heart of the life of the church: we are dependent on God’s blessing in all things and He really does hear our prayers. The prayer meeting is also a great opportunity to grow as a family as we share our burdens and prayer points. One of the positive effects of the past year is that more people have attended the prayer meeting. It is striking that the numbers had gone down to 4-5 people on a regular basis in the first few weeks of 2020, but the numbers have consistently been around 15-20 this year. There are many reasons for this and I would encourage all of us to reflect on this when ‘normality’ returns. It would be a blessing if deepened prayer was one of the positive legacies of Covid-19.

It took a while to adjust to leading prayer meeting on Zoom but the last few months have been a blessing. We have also been encouraged by special visits on Zoom – Tim Heaton, Alan Davey and Mulugeta Ashagre – and we look forward to visits from Maged and Joan Drotta and Hannah Coggins in the coming months. We need wisdom to know how best to incorporate Zoom into the prayer meeting going forward. It is good to know too that there are other opportunities to pray as a fellowship (eg, Sunday Services, ladies’ meeting, building prayer meeting, children and youth meetings, etc).(**Steffan**)

5. Women’s Meeting

During this past year we have been meeting on Zoom, with our first meeting taking place on April 9th 2020. Unfortunately we have not had as many meetings as planned due to illness. However, when we have met, we have found that it has been a real boost to be able to meet together. We have continued to study a ‘Geared for Growth’ series on The Lord’s Prayer. We have also been able to share more openly in a small group some needs and concerns of various members. This has been helpful in recognising specific prayer needs. It has also been a time to pray for others within the fellowship. I was very grateful to Dawn who was able to lead the meeting recently when I was unable to do so. (**Pat**)

6. Men’s Meeting

Well what a different year but also a very blessed year. Whilst not being able to have our usual curry evenings and men’s meal at the Towers Hotel, the Lord has opened new avenues for us to spread the gospel and it is with much excitement that we look forward to the men’s ministry in the coming months.

We are grateful for new contacts over the last few months –Carl, Colin, Tony, Martyn, Mikey and James – and we are hoping to plan some walks in the spring and summer and establish a regular men’s meeting for us to meet in the community and be a witness in the area.

The last year has seen a small group of men who are ‘younger’ in the faith meet over Zoom to explore some aspects of Christian Theology and Christian History to increase the spiritual understanding and raise the spiritual temperature. It has been such a blessing to meet and to hear the discussions which have been a great encouragement. We have used ‘Systematic Theology’ by Wayne Grudem and ‘21 Servants of

Sovereign Joy’ by John Piper We will plan a new programme for September to April (**Alan**)

2020 Balance Sheet

Mount Elim Evangelical Church Charity No. 1141828

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2020

Current Accounts

	2020
1. Main Current Account	£
Balance at bank as of 1st Jan 2020 Current Account	9,223.06
Income	44,220.08
Total In	<u>53,443.14</u>
Less Expenditure	45,787.55
Balance at Bank as of 31st December 2020	<u>7,655.59</u>

2. Active Saver Current Account	
Balance at bank as of 1st Jan 2020 Current Account	239.65
Interest	0.11
Income	36.72
Total In	<u>276.48</u>
Less Transfers Out	136.72
Balance at Bank as of 31st December 2020	<u>139.76</u>

3. Busy Bees Account	
Balance at bank as of 1st Jan 2020 Current Account	456.29
Income	63.65
Total In	<u>519.94</u>
Less Expenditure	200.00
Balance at Bank as of 31st December 2020	<u>319.94</u>

4. Youth Account	
Balance at bank as of 2 nd March 2020 Current Account	0.00
Income	250.00
Total In	<u>250.00</u>
Less Expenditure	95.87
Balance at Bank as of 31st December 2020	<u>154.13</u>

5. Building Current Account	
Balance at bank as of 1st Jan 2020 Current Account	43,932.21
Income	14,538.52
Total In	<u>58,470.73</u>
Less Expenditure	12,409.12
Balance at Bank as of 31st December 2020	<u>46,061.61</u>

NSI Savings Account	
Balance at bank as of 1st January 2020	41,108.24
Transfers In	0.00
Interest	295.96
Total In	<u>41,404.20</u>
Transfers Out	0.00
Balance at bank as of 31 Dec 2020	<u>41,404.20</u>

	Balance at Bank as of 31st December 2020	
Current Account	7,655.59	9,223.06
Active Saver Account	139.76	239.17
Busy Bees Account	319.94	456.29
Building Account	46,061.61	43,932.21
Youth Account	154.13	
NSI Saving Account	41,404.20	41,108.24
Total	<u>95,735.23</u>	<u>94,958.97</u>

2020 Year End PL

Mount Elim Evangelical Church
Charity No. 1141828

Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2020

Statement of Financial Activities on Main Account

	2019	2020
Income	£	£
Offerings	33,156.60	32,777.82
Tax reclaimed on Gift Aid	9,987.29	7,962.50
Gifts	-	23.79
Transfers	197.50	95.87
Donations	-	1,445.00
Hall Hire	2,020.00	664.30
Other income	1,395.96	1,250.80
Bank interest	-	-
	<u>46,757.35</u>	<u>44,220.08</u>
Expenditure		
Pulpit & Salary	24,347.57	24,174.04
Tax & NI	6,152.60	6,146.16
Cleaning	490.00	430.00
Electricity	1,065.00	1,296.00
Building insurance and repairs	842.29	769.22
Water	282.75	109.31
Paul Davies Clwb Ponty and Schools	2,400.00	2,750.00
Pension Contributions	1,527.25	1,698.48
Grass	260.00	237.00
Outreach	2,344.81	1,613.52
Sunday School, Clwb Ponty, Youth	697.38	279.83
Conferences and Study Books	1,064.80	250.89
Equipment	105.53	327.98
Safeguarding	120.00	129.00
Donations	1,719.00	2,500.00
Transfers	3,182.50	2,025.03
Sundry	58.53	728.04
Church expenses	279.80	323.05
	<u>46,939.81</u>	<u>45,787.55</u>
Profit/(Loss)	<u>(182.46)</u>	<u>(1,567.47)</u>

I have examined the books and vouchers of Mount Elim Evangelical Church on a sample basis. The above balance sheet for the year to 31st December 2020 is in accordance with the books and vouchers produced to me and in my opinion represents a true and fair view of the state of affairs as at 31st December 2020.

The cash at bank balances are represented by funds held at Barclays PLC on Current, Active Saver and Building Accounts and the National Savings and Investment Savings Account.

Date:

Signed: D.W.D. Griffiths

2020 Year End PL

Mount Elim Evangelical Church
Charity No. 1141828

Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2020

Statement of Financial Activities Building Account

	2019	2020
Income	£	£
Donations	4,315.00	12,725.00
Grants	-	100.00
Easyfundraising	196.55	178.49
Transfers	2,300.00	350.00
Gift Aid	1,032.50	1,175.03
Other	-	10.00
	<u>7,844.05</u>	<u>14,538.52</u>
Expenditure		
Professional Fees	4,087.17	6,706.12
Planning	-	5,703.00
Transfers	-	-
Land Search	-	-
Contractor Costs	6,463.00	-
Land Purchase	6,400.00	-
Other		
	<u>16,950.17</u>	<u>12,409.12</u>
Profit/(Loss)	<u>(9,106.12)</u>	<u>2,129.40</u>



alan thomas <alan.thomas.email@googlemail.com>

Mount Elim accounts.

1 message

Dyfrig <dyfrig.griffiths@ntlworld.com>

9 February 2021 at 21:09

To: alan thomas <alan.thomas.email@googlemail.com>

Dear Alan,

I confirm that I have examined the books of Mount Elim Evangelical Church, Pontardawe and the above Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st December 2020 in accordance with the books produced to me and in my opinion represents a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Church as at 31st December 2020.

The cash at bank balances are represented by funds held at Barclays Bank PLC on Current, Active Saver, Busy Bees, Youth Account and Building Accounts and the National Savings and Investment Savings Account.

Signed: D.W.D. Griffiths.

Date: 9th February 2021