

*Convert us, Jesus the persecuted,
as you converted Paul, and sent him as apostle to the world.
May our love, our prayers, our suffering,
carry your Gospel at whatever cost
to all who wait to hear it.*



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

13 December 2020

MINUTES

20.01 In Memoriam

- Hilary Davies-Cole, Jessie Mills, Jamie Haswell, Ronnie Strang

20.02 Notification of any A.O.C.B.

- No items mentioned

20.03 Apologies for absence

- Alison Brimelow, Malcolm and Audrey Richardson, Joy Bowker, Sheila Marren

20.04 Approval of Minutes of Annual meeting held on 15 December 2019

- Bullet 19.13 – one sentence is unfinished
- Approved by congregational attendees
- Thanks to Kimberley Moore Ede for taking minutes and keeping these updated.

20.05 Elections to Vestry:

- Thanks to Eleanor Smith and Jeanine Bezuijen for your roles on vestry
- I. Lay Representative: Helen Tyrrell
 - Proposed by Joy Bowker, seconded by Margot Alexander
 - Thank you for standing again
- II. Alternate Lay Representative – David McLellan
 - Proposed by Andrew Kerr, seconded by Lesley Blackmore
 - Thank you for standing again
- III. Constitutive members (4)
 - Nicholas Hotham: proposed by Gavin McEwan, seconded by Kimberley Moore Ede
 - Janet de Vigne; proposed by Jean Keltie, seconded by Elspeth Messenger
 - Simon Parsons: proposed by Gavin McEwan, seconded by Ewan Walker
 - Guy Johnson: proposed by Kimberley Moore Ede, seconded by John Kitchen
 - Thank you all for joining the vestry

20.06 Rector's Report

- I suppose that 'dealing with the unexpected' is a normal feature of life and most of us have reasonable ways of incorporating a little disruption into our otherwise relatively predictable lives. The rhythm of the church year has continued in something like its current shape for many hundreds of years and, even compared with the longstanding annual cycle of events here in Festival City, it's a truly ancient pattern. This time last year, none of us could have imagined that the doors of this church would be locked at Easter, or that the Paschal Vigil, that sits at the heart of our liturgical year, would be celebrated online in hundreds of different homes, with dozens of people making it happen in ways that were very new indeed to most of us
- This time last year, we were still unaware of the virus that would dominate our lives from then until now. This year has brought anxiety for many, severe illness for some, tragic death for others,

unimaginable disruption for all and, inevitably, challenges for our life as a church community. At the start of the year, we were beginning to make plans for how this community would continue its venerable tradition of engagement with the wider community at the heart of our city but only a few weeks after that, our energy was focussed on continuing our life as a church in circumstances that none of us has ever faced before. Lockdowns and unprecedented changes in social behaviour were bound to affect church communities whose instincts are for open doors, regular gathering and constant interaction with each other

- I think it is still too early for us to fully understand what this will have meant for us in its totality, but it's certainly a moment to pause and reflect on what this year has brought us. The first thing I want to say about that is a deep and heartfelt thank you to all who have put so much time and energy into ensuring that our worshipping, praying and communal life have continued in the face of this awful pandemic. From the very first Sunday after our doors were locked, we have ensured that our liturgical life, our fundamental character as a worshipping, praying community, has continued without pause. Our 'behind the scenes' tech team of Harry van der Weijde, Lana Woolford, Jubin Santra, Eleanor Smith and Carrie Gooch have been working week by week, day by day, to offer uninterrupted broadcasts of our Sunday Mass. Our music team headed by John Kitchen and Calum Roberston has brought amazing creativity to the challenge of making music when communal singing is still prohibited. You at home have tuned in daily to services and prayed along with us, offering constant encouragement and support. And your immense generosity has ensured that we can continue to do so at a very high quality with our new streaming system, which will also open up new possibilities for our outreach into the future. The Vestry has worked unflinchingly by this new medium of Zoom to understand and implement constantly shifting guidance designed to keep us safe. And since we reopened, our dedicated team of welcomers have kept us all right and helped us manage to share our beautiful church once more, safely and with the minimum of fuss. Thank you especially to Simon Parsons, Simon Lloyd, Gavin McEwan and Ewan Walker for managing lists and contactless gizmos
- But that's not all. You have supported one another, kept in touch with each other, shared your spiritual struggles with honesty and care, looked out for one another and shown great love and patience with each other when things have been tough. Thank you
- It would be tempting to think that we have done an incredible job of keeping the show on the road, but the truth is that you have done even more than that. Thanks to the tireless work of Mark Gibson and the Property Committee, the stair life project, which has proven immensely more complicated than we expected, has progressed to the point that it has been recently installed and use has begun. Again, incredible generosity has made this possible. On the property front, we also completed extensive work on the Laurie Halls and began several other projects to repair and enhance our building. Thank you, Mark, for your dedication, patience and diligence
- We have also begun an Eco group, a contemplative prayer group, various online discussion groups, zoom coffee, held a stunning presentation for Remembrance, two weekly meditation sessions, a regular family mass, online meetings for children every week, kept our regular White Rose publication going and begun explorations with Steps to Hope for a new partnership to address the needs of people caught in the cycle of homelessness and addiction in our city
- Of course, there are many things we have missed. Above all, we miss being together. We miss having our building used as fully as possible. We miss singing very much indeed. And there is no doubt that there are things we could have done better. But today is our chance to thank one another for doing all we could have and more to keep together and to keep praying. Do not underestimate what an extraordinary gift that has been
- As we look forward, this experience will have taught us many things about what matters most. It will give us fresh impetus to look beyond our walls to the city and the world around us, vowing never to take for granted the fragile earth we inhabit, the social bonds that make us human, the exercise of compassion that makes life possible, the exploration of beauty that makes life worthwhile. Our new vestry has one major task to address, and that is how we make that vow live in the heart of all we do. Thank you all for your inspiring faithfulness, your selfless generosity and your good-humoured patience in this most difficult of years
- We will be receiving a curate in the early part of next year, some time before Easter. We have only just found out so details will come once they are available

20.07 Report and Accounts of the Vestry

- Question: how has gift-aid increased whilst giving has gone down?
 - This has to do with timing, we have to apply for it and it is accounted for when it is received
- Question: Is there any advantage over payroll giving over standing orders?
 - Not necessarily, it is a matter of preference. The importance is gift-aiding it. You don't need to go through HMRC. Administratively, it is easier as payroll giving as it is all automatic.
- Question: are there any numbers about online giving via the website?
 - No, these have not been separated from all giving
- Giving via some websites incurs an additional administrative fee. Also, anonymous donations cannot be gift-aided
- Thanks to the congregation for your generosity. We have lost a lot of income due to the cancellation of hall lets
- Question: what are the chances of moving to zero deficit position?
 - Although deficit will be decreasing over the next few years, we hope to come to a break-even position in about 3 years
 - The main factor of the deficit has been property spending and we should expect to have a cycle of property expenditure
 - This year's budget included all known costs but not the potential grants and donations to cover them so our position may be better than anticipated
- New stewardship team: Therese Christie and Ewan Walker will be sharing the role taking over from Carrie Gooch and Lynn Niven
- Annual report approved by those in attendance

20.08 Appointment of independent examiner

- Malcolm McRae would like to propose we continue with
- Approved by those in attendance

20.09 Report of the Lay Representative

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20.10 Committee and group reports and questions

- This has not been done the normal way this year as it has not been a normal year. There haven't been any reports done this year but there has been a lot of work going on behind the scenes and many people new to OSP joining online.
- Our servers and choir members, although not back to normal, have continued to be busy.
- Hopefully this time next year this will be a part of history and we will be back to normal
- Lana Woolford would also like to thank Simon Parsons & Ginger Franklin as our new web team volunteers who helped me to prepare an Accessibility Statement for the website and are uploading services, and Ewan Walker for organising the new card reader
- Question: I hadn't noticed a meditation group on the website are there notifications being sent out for new initiatives?
 - Fr John McLuckie will ensure this is posted online
- Question/comment: put all groups in next White Rose?
- Thanks to Eleanor Smith for her quizzes!
- Thanks to Helen Ratcliffe for keeping up the online post-coffee chats

20.11 R&R4 Update

- Not much to say at the moment, we have had to pause due to Covid.
- How do we look forward? How do we reach out?

20.12 Wardens' report

- Thanks to Gavin McEwan and Lesley Blackmore for their work over this last year

- Thank you to Gavin McEwan for supporting Fr John over the last year as it has been a difficult time
- Lesley Blackmore is looking forward to coming back to church once all this has passed. Thank to all for emails and calls. Thank you to Simon Parsons and Gavin McEwan for taking over the welcomers role
- Gavin McEwan would like to thank Fr John being here and ensuring that we are still pushing forward
- Thanks to Simon Lloyd for his work as church administrator

20.13 Any other competent business

- Question: Has the eco-group actually started? If yes, I seem to have missed the information. Who is organising?
 - We have just started a group and have recently registered as an eco-congregation. It is being headed up by Elspeth Strachan, please contact her for more information
- Janet de Vigne has emailed the College of Bishops asking if we can have 4 members
 - We have done our best following the government and Diocesan guidance which is complicated and very limited. This has been particularly hard for those working in performing arts
 - Thanks to the choir for all their work
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