



the Company of Servers

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

30th April 2011

St. Michael and All Angels Church, Headingley, Leeds

1. Chaplain General's Welcome

Fr. Andrew Nunn welcomed Bp. Stephen, Bishop of Ely, our Bishop Visitor and thanked him for presiding and preaching at the Festival Mass. He felt it was good for the Annual Festival to move round the country visiting other chapters to experience life and ministry in other dioceses.

He outlined the current state of the Church of England affirming the ordination of women as positive regarding being the church of the nation, catholic and committed to the local communities.

Referring to the ordination of women as bishops he commented that General Synod had sent the debate into diocesan and deanery synod who were considering it. He stated it was important that Affirming Catholics, the Society of Catholic Priests were presenting a firm argument regarding the issue whilst understanding both sides of the argument.

The Anglican Covenant was for dioceses to consider and to hold Archbishop Rowan in prayer as he leads the church through this difficult time whilst remaining in communion with and respond in the way God wants to make Christ known in our own localities.

The Ordinariate is portrayed in the press as a mass exodus from the Church of England. At the launch of the London Chapter (15th January 2011) it was noteworthy that at Westminster Cathedral the first three clergy going to the Ordinariate were being ordained into the Roman Catholic Church.

As servers our concern are the actions and to be informed about the traditions, help others, and through the outward signs develop spiritually and sacramentally through the teaching of the clergy in our parishes. This is the challenge for servers and the Company of Servers provides a context in which we can learn and develop and at Chapter level be able to talk about our ministry with confidence.

2. Apologies for absence

These were received from:

St. Alban's Chapter: Fr. Peter Wadsworth, Andrew Butcher, Stephen Thomas, Brenda Tipping (priest), Jane Kraft (priest), Jo Spreadbury (priest) Fr. Richard

Watson, David Simpson, Fred Maryon, James McDonald, Neo Notley, Ron Whittle, Sarah Keeling, Stephen De Silva, Terry Newton.

Norwich Chapter: Alison Harding, Elsie Hutcheon (priest)

Ripon and Leeds Chapter: Luke Milner, Maurice Pethrick, Pat Shuter

London Chapter: Nathaniel Gilmour, David Beresford, John Havers, Robert Knowles
Luke Verrall

3. Minutes of the St. Alban's 2010 Annual General Meeting

These were attached to the Agenda. No matters arising so accepted and signed.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising

5. Chairman's report

These are attached to these minutes.

Thanks were given to the Ripon and Leeds chapter for organising and hosting the festival particularly Fr. David, Rev. Catherine McPherson (deacon) the choir and organist and the staff of St. Michael's Headingley.

Thanks were also given to the Company of Servers Central Committee,

David Warner and David Stephenson have both moved to the north for professional reasons.

Charlotte Botham has resigned from the position of Youth Officer on the Central Committee so thanks were noted her work.

Fr. Andrew Nunn was thanked for reinforcing the inclusiveness of the Company of Servers.

Bishop Stephen was thanked for his support and congratulations for his translation to Ely.

The membership of the Company of Servers is gradually increasing and chapters in more dioceses are being started.

David Warner addressed the Society of Catholic Priests conference and there are links from the SCP website to COS website.

COS has a Facebook group.

The next few months will see the inauguration of Chelmsford and Worcester chapters.

In July 2011 there will be a COS presence with SCP on an exhibition stand at the General Synod. David Warner will assist with this.

There had been communication between the Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary and COS with the conclusion being drawn that COS is the inclusive organisation and will not be drawn into any disagreements with other organisations exhibiting differing views.

The Handbook is in preparation and will be published soon. During its production Harry Pedlow, St. Alban's chapter died and his photographs are included in the handbook. A charitable partner is supporting the production of the handbook.

The loan for medals is being paid back to SCP

The collection from the festival services will be used to defray costs.

The Central Committee hold funds to support chapters where necessary in organising the festival or larger events.

6. Treasurer General's report

John Kitchener, Treasurer presented the accounts which had been independently examined by Claire Stephenson. He commented COS was indebted to Fr. Andrew's donation. The Festival is the greatest expenditure each year.

COS paid £250 of the SCP loan in 2010.

The income from subscriptions is a bit scattered due to when Chapters hold their own Annual General Meetings but over time this will settle and income from chapters be more predictable. John Kitchener reported that we cannot deal with Gift Aid currently because we do not have charity status but Graham Way is going to discuss how to progress this.

Current financial situation £1411.48 as at 30th April 2010.

That the accounts be accepted: Proposed David ?? St. Alban's. Seconded Tom Halliday Ripon and Leeds

There were no questions arising from the Treasurer's report. Copy of the account attached to these minutes.

7. Membership Officer's report

Dioceses with COS chapters: Ripon and Leeds, York, Southwark, Bath and Wells, Salisbury, Norwich, London, Exeter, St. Albans. Chapters in process: Chelmsford, Worcester, Guildford, Blackburn and Liverpool. Manchester and Birmingham have inquired.

The total membership is 240 with 30 Associate members.

The diocesan chapters have links to the Central Committee website for maintaining communication about events, submitting photographs and it is up to local officers to keep the Communication Officer informed so that COS communications are current and informative. It is the responsibility of the local chapter officers to inform the Communication Officer of any changes to local committees and ensure contact details are up to date.

The Constitution is for all the chapters with a section for the management of the running of local chapters.

When new members are admitted the local chapter should send details to the Membership Officer in order to keep central records up to date.

There were no questions arising from the Membership Secretary's report. Copy of the report attached to these minutes.

Proposed: Robin Bennett Ripon and Leeds

Seconded: Jim Larkin St. Alban's

8. Youth Officer's report

In the absence of the Youth Officer a very brief report was given by the Chairman, David Warner outlining the role of education, spiritual development and consideration needing to be given to the needs of young people in their ministry as servers.

9. Constitution

The amendment to 3.1.9 'contribute the agreed annual subscriptions' accepted UNANIMOUSLY.

The amendment to 3.5 'Affiliate members' was to include ordained members and others not involved in serving but supporting COS and as affiliate members they would receive a badge. Discussion took place around 3.1.3 as to whether some potentially interested people were excluded, e.g. clergy spouses/partners, musicians and parents/family members of young COS members. These groups are eligible for Affiliate membership.

A different group to be included was Eucharistic ministers and they are to be encouraged and become full members.

A question was raised about eligibility of the above groups and concluded that Affiliate Membership was appropriate for all the above, thus amendment to 3.5 accepted UNANIMOUSLY.

The amendment 6.2 'Governance of chapters' was discussed because some people are members of more than one chapter. Voting rights: members may only vote in one chapter, their 'home' chapter. Members may only serve on the committee of one chapter even though they may attend other chapters. However, those on Central Committee may also hold office in their local chapter as is currently the case for the General Secretary who is Chair of a local chapter. It was proposed that members can hold more than one position on their local chapter committee to cover all the posts.

The amendment 6.2 was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

The amendment 9.6 'The Central Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to two additional members to undertake specific tasks. To become permanent appointments these must be ratified by a vote at the next annual general meeting and election shall be secured by a simple majority of the voting members present.' The amendment 9.6 accepted UNANIMOUSLY.

The amendment 12.3 'Chapter governance' Chapters are responsible for their officers, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Child Protection and collection of subscriptions. This was a clarification point of the role of local chapter committee members.

A question arose over 12.3.3 of the legal requirement from chapters over Child Protection and the chapters are covered under their own diocesan policies and a Central Committee policy.

The amendments to 12.3 accepted UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Central Committee Elections

Members were reminded that the Central Committee term of office is for **three** years and individuals can seek re-election for a further three term. Jack Harding, Norwich/London has been co-opted to the Central Committee since February 2011 as the Youth Officer. His appointment required ratifying and was accepted UNANIMOUSLY.

A question arose concerning clarification of the current committee members whose term would finish with the 2012 Festival and Annual General Meeting. These individuals would be eligible for re-election. The Youth Officer's appointment was queried since he was beginning his term of office in 2011 and would he have to be re-elected in one year's time or could he serve until 2013?

11. Festival 2012

The Salisbury chapter will host the 2012 Festival and Annual General Meeting possibly at St. Thomas Church Salisbury in late April.

12. Any other business

12.1 For the next AGM could papers be prepared beforehand and distributed electronically

12.2 Fr. Andrew Nunn advertised a book he had contributed to: DAVISON A., NUNN A., and WRIGHT T., (2010) Lift up your hearts: A prayer book for Anglicans, London, SPCK. The book contains prayers for all people and is for all involved in any form of ministry in the church, not just clergy but servers, people who welcome, bell-ringers and others. The main royalties for sales go to SCP and Affirming Catholicism.

12.3 with about 240 members there should have been more money in the COS accounts but some chapters had not had their AGMs and so this year subscription income would be staggered.

12.4 A question from Graham Way regarding the website was asked about how to contact the website to ensure information was disseminated quickly, If information is sent to the Communications Officer or the Membership Officer then it is acted upon efficiently.

12.5 Thanks were given to Willy Varlow as the Festival Coordinator for his work.

12.6 Thanks also to David Warner for organising the services

12.7 Thanks to the choir, organist and staff of St. Michael's Headingley and the committee of Ripon and Leeds chapter for hosting the 2011 Festival and Annual General Meeting.

13. Prayer and closing comments

Bishop Stephen stated he had enjoyed the Festival and closed the meeting with prayer.