



the Company of Servers

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

13th April 2013

1. Welcome

Clive Watts, Chairman of the Leicester Chapter welcomed members and guests to Leicester Cathedral.

2. Chaplain General's welcome

Fr. Andrew Nunn welcomed the companions to Leicester Cathedral. His tasked us to renew our commitment to the church and use the gifts God gave us as called. He stated that women bishops had been agreed and is the way forward taken from General Synod debates. There is a Private Members Bill going before Parliament which could be disruptive for the church because Frank Field MP is challenging the discriminatory affect, in the light of equality for women, of the vote from Synod in November 2012. Fr. Andrew also exhorted us, as members of the Company of Servers and Society of Catholic Priests, to pray for the General Synod in July where the issue of women bishops is on the agenda.

As the Festival was taking place in the week that Baroness Thatcher died and her funeral was to be a state funeral Fr. Andrew spoke of role places like St. Paul's cathedral play in such events and of the role of the church overall in funeral ministry since the majority of funerals in the country take place in churches.

Thanks were given for the Company of Servers members because clergy need servers and what is done in the parishes is preparation for services. He also outlined the increased role of lay people in parishes and that a professional approach is needed by all servers to assist clergy in their ministry.

The Festival had received a message from Bishop Stephen, stating he was delighted with the content and format of the handbook, and reminding us that: 'We are called a company because we are those who share bread together. As good Catholics we know how to party and share hospitality. This is only possible because Jesus gives us his body to share in the form of bread. Always take to heart and live the prayer in the rite of admission that we are called to adoration and to help others pray.'

3. Apologies for absence

Alexander Hobbs, Membership Officer

London Chapter: Graham Way, St. Matthew's Westminster server, Ian Flatman, Jack Harding.

Southwark Chapter: Denise Mead, Lynne Jones.

Ripon and Leeds Chapter: David Waddington. Judith Waddington, Judith Grubb, Sue Hill.

Leicester Chapter: Ricky Hallam, Les Mitchelmore, Mary Mitchell.

Norwich Chapter: Michael Watson, Elsie Hutcheon (Priest)

St. Alban's Chapter: Sarah Keeling, Jim Larkin.

ATTENDANCE

Southwark Chapter	9
St. Alban's Chapter	5
London	9
Norwich	2
Ripon and Leeds Chapter	7
Leicester Chapter	16
Blackburn	1
Lichfield (SCP)	1
York	1
Chelmsford (SCP)	1
Visitors from Derby	2

4. Minutes of the Croydon Minster Annual General Meeting

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

5. Matters arising

A question was raised regarding the situation in Chichester diocese and starting a chapter.

6. Chairman's report

Attached to these minutes.

7. Treasurer General's report

Attached to these minutes

John Kitchener encouraged companions to be generous to offset the expenses of Leicester Cathedral for hosting the Festival since there was not sufficient money in the bank to cover the cost this year. There were no questions arising from the 2012 accounts.

John Kitchener presented a budget for the Company of Servers because there had been significant investment in the production of the handbooks (£3000) the good quality publicity banners (£300), postcards and porch cards as well as ongoing cost of medals and badges. The handbook was being financed by a loan.

Subscription payments had been received from two chapters, London and Blackburn and Liverpool. Chapter Treasurers needed chasing to send the subscription monies to the Central Committee.

A major financial change since 2012 has been obtaining charity status which means the Central Committee can receive Gift Aid from donations. Getting Gift Aid from subscriptions is more complex and is still under discussion by the Central Committee.

A question arose of how the Gift Aid would work for chapters which John Kitchener replied saying it would only work for money sent to Central Committee who would then deal with it on behalf of a chapter. Could Central Committee claim on a gross amount? The response was that this was still under discussion by Central Committee. Chapters could send all the subscriptions to the Central Committee who would then claim Gift Aid and return the appropriate portion of subscription money back to chapters. Non-taxpayers could still give cheques, cash.

Gift Aid forms had been produced and yellow envelopes.

The accounts were Independently Examined by Claire Stephenson. It was proposed by Andrew Butcher (St. Albans) and seconded Olive Hopkins (by that she continue this task for 2013-2014. Accepted UNANIMOUSLY

8. Membership Officer's report

Attached to these minutes.

The total membership is 396 increasing to 425 with Bangor and Bristol.

The membership needs to be kept up to date regularly and sent to the Central Committee.

During the year the work of the Membership Officer has increased and the Central committee are to discuss re-organising the post.

Since Chapters have tended to use the date of their foundations as a subscription year it was suggested by Pat Hawkins (SCP) that a calendar year be used to ensure more efficient collection from Chapters.

9. Festival 2014

Date 3rd May 2014 venue will fixed by the committee. The location will be determined by where the largest groups of Companions are: St. Albans, Leeds and Ripon, Southwark, Leicester and where travel is the easiest.

10. Any other business

David Warner was awarded Honorary Life Membership for his service as the First Chairman of the Company of Servers. He was thanked for his work on the handbook. David is to be ordained Deacon in St. Albans.

Chichester diocese had organised an event at Brighton but since this is a sensitive diocese the door is still open.

Mark Charlton (Communications Officer) spoke of the value of Facebook group membership for the Company of Servers.

Thanks to Alexander Hobbs for his work on the Membership tasks.

Thanks to Clive Watts and the Leicester diocesan team who provided refreshments and the use of the cathedral.

11. Prayer and closing comments

Fr. Andrew Nunn closed the meeting with the Grace.