

# THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*An important part of the Society's Annual Meeting was the Business Meeting  
It is fully reported on the website – just go to 'Past Events' – this is a summary*

This year's Annual Meeting, it must be said, was rather poorly attended. Things were not helped by disruption on the railways and London Underground, but only 44 members gathered in St Mary's German Church in London for what was a very stimulating day, and 17 of them were on Zoom. Bishop Paul, our Anglican Co-Moderator, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. A number of members had given their apologies, and he reported that Bishop Paulina Hlawiczka-Trotman of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain had sent us her greetings.



He then invited the Very Rev Tom Bruch to briefly explain why the Trustees had decided that a **new Constitution** had become necessary. Times had changed, Tom said, and the existing one dated 2018 was no longer adequate. The new constitution followed guidelines laid down by the Charity Commission. It had been circulated to all our members for comment and question. Now, on behalf of the Trustees, he proposed its adoption and the motion was carried unanimously. Tom then told the meeting that the Trustees would soon be publishing a set of Bye-Laws covering the day-to-day running of the Society and the document would be circulated to all members.

Bishop Paul then thanked **our Presidents** for their invaluable support during the past year. The Rt Rev Jana Jeruma-Grinberga (Lutheran) and the Rt Rev David Hamid (Anglican) had both agreed to continue and were declared appointed.

Tom Bruch took the chair for the next item which was the election of **the Co-Moderators**. He informed the meeting that the Rt Rev Paul Ferguson and the Rev Dr Jaakko Rusama had both been proposed and, there being no other nominations, he declared them elected, thanked them for their leadership during the past year and handed back the chair to Bishop Paul.

Once **the Minutes** of the last AGM on 11th March 2023 held in Coventry Cathedral had been approved, he called on his Lutheran Co-Moderator to present the **Moderators' Report**. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation Jaakko reminded



the meeting of the Aims of the Society and the role of the Moderators. He reminded them of the theme of last year's meeting, "An Ecumenical response to the Violence of War" and its continuing relevance in our troubled world. He thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their hard work, not least in drawing up the new Constitution. A major event had been a Reception held in Westminster Abbey for Anglican and Lutheran chaplains and pastors. The Society had been represented at the Kirchentag in June 2023 and our stall in the "Market of Possibilities" had been well visited. He thanked our German National Coordinator, the Rev Dr Miriam Haar, for organising it so well. He then thanked everyone who publicises the work of the Society via The Window,

Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), reminding us that everyone involved in the Society is a volunteer, many are lay people, and they all give their time freely. He referred to the National Coordinators who promote the Society in their countries and, as time and money permit, organise activities for local members. 'We are part of a Global Communion,' he concluded, 'and as Anglicans and Lutherans we endeavour to express our unity, and the unity of all Christians, in Christ.' The Moderators' Report can be found in full on the website.

Our Treasurer, Patrick Litton, was unable to attend the meeting but his **Treasurer's Report and the Statement of Accounts** had been duly examined and circulated in advance to all members of the Society. Both were received and Patrick thanked for keeping the Society on a sound financial footing. His Report and the Accounts are on the website. Lisbeth Pedersen was appointed to serve for 2024 as Examiner of the Accounts.

Fredrik Ulseth from Norway and Jaakko Rusama from Finland had submitted written **National Coordinators' Reports** and these can be found on the website. Fredrik, who was present at the meeting, suggested that the Society encourage the establishment of more partnerships between Dioceses and between Parishes. Tom VanPoole from USA, who attended on Zoom, told the meeting that the Society in USA, like many other ecumenical groups, was still suffering the effects of COVID-19. However, just recently two new members had been recruited.

Helen Harding presented her **Membership Secretary's Report** and was thanked for the way she keeps the membership informed about the Society's activities. We have more than 350 members in 37 countries. Again, her report is on the website.

The **elections** followed. Canon Dick Lewis (Anglican) was elected Secretary, Patrick Litton (Anglican) as Treasurer and the Ven Christine Allsopp (Anglican), the Very Rev Tom Bruch (Lutheran), the Rev Jonathan Collis (Anglican), the Rev Rebecca Daniel (Lutheran), Mrs Helen Harding (Anglican), the Rev Lagle Heinla (Lutheran), Dr Richard Stephenson (Lutheran) and the Very Rev Eliza Zikmane (Lutheran) were elected to the committee. The Officer and Committee members are the Trustees of the Society.

There was no other business and the meeting ended with prayer led by Bishop Paul.