

**SOCIETY FOR ECUMENICAL STUDIES**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday 13 February 2001**

Present: Martin Conway (in chair), Martin Cressey, John Bradley, Barney Milligan, James Cassidy, Paul Avis, Maximos Lavriotes, Fidelis Daly, Frank Davis, Mary Tanner, Gareth Powell, Mark Woodruff, Martin Reardon, Philip Morgan, David Carter.

Apologies: Liz Tait, David Butler, Donald Norwood, Michael Rowett.

**Secretary's Review**

David Carter gave a brief review of events in the previous year and explained the 'stall' in activity. We then moved to the full-scale discussion of the future of the Society. David Carter had received ten written replies to the letter sent out by Paul MacPartlan and Martin Conway. They differed considerably, but, overall, there seemed to be a strong desire that the Society should help keep members up to date on key ecumenical developments and considerable support for the idea of concentrating on an annual residential conference (with some varied opinions as to length and timing). Views varied on the question of concentrating on particular aims/issues and on whether there could be a role for regional groups.

In the discussion, John Bradley mentioned the Rural Theology Association as having experienced some of the same difficulties as SES. Joint conferences with other societies might be helpful. Barney Milligan emphasised how joint co-operation had transformed the prospects of some small societies working on European matters. The possibility of a link with Turvey and 'One in Christ' was mentioned.

When the question of recruiting younger members was raised, some emphasised that young people no longer share the 'meeting culture' of a past generation and do things much more informally, via the 'net' etc.

Considerable emphasis was placed on our intention to forge links between different 'worlds' in ecumenism. Elizabeth Welch had written encouraging us to get an 'overview' of what was going on. She also wondered what co-operation we could achieve with journals in the field. John Bradley mentioned the very poor communication between the 'academic' and 'popular' levels of ecumenism. Paul Avis mentioned the new 'Journal for the Study of the Christian Church'. Martin Conway mentioned Israel Selvanayagam's intention to create an Ecumenical Centre in Birmingham and hoped we would be able to co-operate with him.

The question was remitted to the Committee which would be meeting on 8 March.

**Formal Business**

Paul MacPartlan resigned as Convenor and Martin Conway was unanimously elected as his successor. David Carter and Fidelis Daly were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Other committee members were elected as follows: Paul MacPartlan, Maximos Lavriotes, Rodney Matthews and Gareth Powell. Barney Milligan kindly offered help to the Secretary, an offer he much appreciated.

**Financial Statement.**

Sister Fidelis explained the problems that had been encountered arising from the Bank and her enforced move from her normal premises. The balance was reported as £1,361.47.