

The Society for Ecumenical Studies

MINUTES

of the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 30 May 2007 at the Hinsley Room, Westminster Cathedral, London SW1

Members Present: Connie Ho Yan Au, John Bradley, Teresa Burke, David Carter, Paul & Pauline Collins, Martin Conway, Frank Davis, Kate Davson, Sophia Fletcher, Bob Fyffe, Maximos Lavriotes, Hilary Martin, Donald Norwood, Mary Tanner, John O'Toole, Alan Rainer, Ruth Reardon, Mark Woodruff

Guests Present: Marianne Atkinson, James Bogle, Andrew Faley, Richard Truss, Keith Lander, Paul Paniccia, Joy Peck, Kathy Robinson, Vincent Smith, Paula Watson, Maria Winkler

1. Opening Prayer

Martin Conway, Chairman and Presiding Officer, opened with prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence

The apologies of Paul Avis, Celia Blackden, Jenny Bond, James Cassidy, Bishop Christopher Chessun, Nicholas Latham, Gerard Mannion, Barney Milligan, Paul Murray, Paul Fiddes and Michael Seed were noted.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 23 May 2006

These were signed as a correct record.

4. Executive Committee's Annual Report for 2006

Approved. In reviewing the previous year, Martin Conway drew attention to the altered role for the ecumenical instruments of the various churches and denominations. The four national Churches Together in each of the constituent countries of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have effectively become the lead organisations with Churches Together in Britain & Ireland becoming an agency of the four for co-ordinating supra-national concerns and activities. The Society's engagement in the first instance is thus with Churches Together in England and thereby to CTBI, CYTUN, ACTS and the ICC.

The role of the Bodies in Association had increasingly come to the fore, given a certain reduction in capacity for the national and supra-national instruments, testifying to the pro-active, grass roots and innovative potential in the 'voluntary sector' of the ecumenical movement.

Hilary Martin and Kate Davson reported on the Stuttgart "Together for Europe" assembly of European Ecumenical Movements & Communities. Even when churches as institutions seem to have lost the verve of ecumenism, the ecumenical groups demonstrate considerable energy, realising the unity of the Church in united service and witness. The spiritual affirmation that the event had signalled should be a driver to the institutional churches to lose no time or effort in attending to those matters of faith and order which continue to keep Christians apart. Fortuitously the assembly was also celebrating the Joint Declaration on Justification between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church, to which the Methodist Church has also become a signatory.

5. Financial Statement and Annual Accounts to 31 December 2006

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| Expenditure: | £722-40 |
| Income: | £311-00 |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure: | £411-40 |
| Opening balance at 1 January 2006: | £1028-82 |
| Balance carried forward at 31 December 2007: | £617-42 |

Hilary Martin explained that income is always vulnerable because of poor responses to requests for subscription payments from members. The bank balance at the date of the Annual General Meeting stood at £902-28.

The Financial Statement and Annual Accounts were approved.

6. Membership and Subscriptions

These are currently set at the following levels:

- £20 Individual Members (£10 for retired, students, religious & unwaged)
- £24 Married couples (£12 retired, students and unwaged)

7. Election of Executive Committee for 2007-2008

The Chairman invited the Guest Speaker, Professor Paul Fiddes, to preside at the following elections.

- a) **Chairman & Presiding Officer:** Martin Conway was proposed by Mary Tanner and seconded by Donald Norwood. There being no other nominations, Martin Conway was declared elected.
- b) **Secretary:** Mark Woodruff was proposed by Mary Tanner and Donald Norwood. There being no other nominations, Mark Woodruff was declared elected.
- c) **Treasurer:** Hilary Martin was proposed by Mary Tanner and seconded by Donald Norwood. There being no other nominations, Hilary Martin was declared elected.
- d) **Members of the Committee:** The members of the outgoing committee - John Bradley, David Carter, Maximos Lavriotes and Alan Rainer – were proposed by Donald Norwood and seconded by John O'Toole. There being no other nominations, they were declared elected.
- e) **Honorary Members of the Committee:** Paul Murray, in view of the Society's links with the ecumenical study and composition of the curriculum of the department of Theology at the University of Durham, was proposed as an honorary corresponding member of the Committee by Mark Woodruff, seconded by Maximos Lavriotes. This was approved. Paul Murray, past Chairman and currently a member of the theology faculty at the Catholic University of America in Washington was proposed by Mark Woodruff as an honorary corresponding member of the committee, seconded by Maximos Lavriotes. This was approved.

8. Future Plans

Mark Woodruff gave notice of the autumn conference, Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Ecumenical Learning, to be held at St Mary's Church, Cadogan Street, LONDON SW3 on November 3rd.

9. Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations: A Kick Start?

A study discussion was addressed and led by Dr Mary Tanner, European President of the World Council of Churches, in conversation with Mgr Andrew Faley, Assistant General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales.