THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL SOCIETY
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Monday 15 May, 2023, 6.30pm
St Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Yard, London EC4.

Chaired by Mark Kirby, Chairman of Council.

Apologies:
Paul Barnwell
Fiona Rosen
Graham White
Christopher Moore

AGM papers: The AGM papers and agenda had been posted to members in advance, and the draft AGM minutes, draft accounts, and annual report 2023 had been made available on the Society's website.

1. Welcome. The Chairman Mark Kirby welcomed attendees. 135 had registered to attend, either in person or online. 48 attended in person with 39 present online. He thanked the Revd Malcolm Torry for welcoming the Society to this fine venue.

2. Minutes of the 2022 AGM. No comments were received and therefore the minutes were considered to be accepted.

3. Annual report. Becky Payne, Secretary, reported that 2022 had felt like a return to something like normality after the disruptions of Covid.

Successful visits had included a private tour of Kensal Green Cemetery, a walking tour of medieval churches in York and two Roman Catholic churches in Notting Hill and Bayswater.

The Annual Conference, held jointly with the Church Monuments Society in October, had been on the theme of *Last Rites – Funerals and funeral monuments*, and was held online; it was attended by over 100 people. The annual lecture took place in April at the Art Workers' Guild; the speaker was Dr Christopher Webster, whose subject, *Late-Georgian Churches: a reassessment*, was based on work for his book, *Late-Georgian Churches: Anglican architecture, patronage and church-going in England, 1790–1840*, published in 2022. In December, the 25th annual Stephen Dykes Bower Memorial Lecture was held at the Art Workers' Guild, with three distinguished speakers addressing the topical theme of *Realising the Church's Response to Climate Change*, focussing on significant works being carried out at York Minster and other cathedrals and major churches.

Publications in 2022 included a monograph, *Leeds Minster*, comprising the papers from a conference held by the at the Minster in 2021, as well as issue 61 of *Ecclesiology Today*, two editions of *Church Crawler* and four e-newsletters.

Paul Gray had assumed responsibility for website management and for increasing the Society's social media presence. We had also welcomed Frances Cook as the new Visits Secretary and Fiona Rosen as Conference and Events Coordinator. Although taking effect in 2023, Council has said goodbye to two former Chairmen and longstanding members of Council, Trevor Cooper and Paul Velluet, who between them had served the Society for nearly 75 years. We owe them a considerable debt of gratitude.

No comments were received so the circulated report was deemed to be accepted.

4. Accounts for 2022. In his commentary Anthony Gilmour, Hon Treasurer, reported that the Society's income was slightly down on the year before, but this was to be expected in view of the cycle of membership income, and would be more than offset by the proposed increase in subscriptions. The Society's finances were broadly stable. No questions or queries were raised and therefore the accounts were deemed to be accepted.

5. Resolutions. The meeting was invited to vote on four resolutions, details of which had been set out in the agenda. Motion 1 related to changes to subscription rates, Motion 2 to overseas membership, Motion 3 to amend the laws of the society to provide for electronic voting and Motion 4 to elect Paul Velluet a Vice-President of the Society. On the last of these, the Chairman put on record his heartfelt thanks to Paul, on behalf of the Society, for his outstanding service of forty years (including a period as Chairman), his deep commitment to the Society's work and for his sage counsel and good companionship. Similar thanks were also due to Trevor Cooper, who was also stepping down from Council after a long service of twenty-five years, and who had already been made a vice-president. All four motions were carried *nem con*, the fourth with applause.

6. Appreciation of contributions by our President and Vice-Presidents. The meeting noted our grateful thanks for their support for the work of the Society.

7. Election of honorary officers and members of the Council. The following nominations had been received: Chairman: Dr Mark Kirby; Deputy Chairman: Andrew Derrick; Editor of *Ecclesiology Today*: Nick Chapple; Editor of *Church Crawler*: Phil Draper; Hon Treasurer: Anthony Gilmour; Secretary: Becky Payne; Reviews Editor: Dr Christopher Webster; Membership Secretary and Website Manager: Graham White; Communications Manager: Paul Gray; Visits Secretary: Frances Cook; Events Administrator: Fiona Rosen. Other members of Council: Dr Paul Barnwell. Responses in the room and online confirmed that the meeting was happy for those nominated to be elected *en bloc.*

8. Honorary Auditor. Mark Ockelton was thanked and commended for his careful scrutiny of the Society's accounts. It was proposed that he should be re-elected as Hon Auditor

(independent examiner). Unanimous positive responses in the room and online confirmed that he was re-elected.

9. Any other business. Mark Kirby announced this year's conference, *Stained Glass Revivals*, which would take place at St John's, Waterloo, in October. He also referred to the proposal to send members *Church Crawler* by email, should they wish to receive it in that form. Mark Ockelton announced that this year was the 400th anniversary of Lincoln's Inn Chapel, to be marked by a forthcoming lecture at the chapel by Dr Mark Kirby.

The AGM was followed at 7pm by the Society's Annual Lecture, given by Professor Anthony Geraghty, a leading scholar of Sir Christopher Wren, who was currently editing the architect's letters. His lecture was the Society's contribution to the Wren 300 celebrations, and took the theme 'The place of God in the design philosophies of Wren and Hawksmoor'. Prof Geraghty's learned presentation contrasted Wren's 'geometrical reasoning and ocular experiment' with Hawksmoor's delight in 'fancy', or creative imagination.