

**St Michael's North Carlton
Annual Meeting
November 27, 2011**

11:12am Meeting convened.

1. INTRODUCTION

Meeting chaired by the vicar, Rev Steve Webster.

The vicar asked everyone present to find someone who worships at the different Sunday service to them, introduce each other, have a chat about how that service has been for them this year.

Three minutes of chat.

Comments from the chairman

The electoral roll has been available for editing in previous weeks. The parish directory is available today, but not given out publicly.

There is a TEAR gift stall at the back. You're welcome to move over during the meeting, and make a market of the temple courts!

A roving mic will be used, especially for the questions from the floor towards the end.

Steve Webster prays.

A clipboard is passed around to take attendance and apologies.

Present:

Hilary Toppin

Su-Hsien Kaun

Steve Manders

Julie Elder

David Elder

Lucy Watson

Brad Watson

Paul Robison

Chris Hui

Greg David

Christine Hutchinson

Peter Hutchinson

Julie Bigson

Marilyn Di Stefano

Franco Di Stefano

Sharyn Young

John Cy Young

Nicola Reynolds

Janette Allen

Melanie lamb

Deidre Williamson

Maryann Lyttle

Laurence Davis

Noelene Horton

Barbara Sterner

Gillian Baker

Roslyn Loader

Christine Hayward

Dianne Shay

Cindy Shay

David Wagner

Jacqui Wagner

Christ Reynolds

Richard Trist

Glenda Trist

Fred Batterton

Catherine Merry

Peter Alsen

Grant MacKenzie

Shelley Knight

Peter Summers

Diana Summers

Audrey Lile

Bob lile

Jamie Bourne

Chris Bourne

Hannah Bourne

David Fuller

Dave Sisson

Anne West

Caroline Blackburn

Graham McCoy

Leanne McCoy

Jonathan McCoy

Steve Webster

Nonie Flynn

Apologies:

Lyn Paul
Cinti Joule
Suzy Davies
Leon Di Stefano

Hannah Young
Shelley Young
Andrew Allen
Thomas Allen

Carolyn Alsen
Deborah Upton
Sharon Noske
Phil Noske

Steve Webster presents the agenda.

This is not an Annual General Meeting like a corporation, just the Annual Meeting of the parish. So bring forward matters not as shareholders or committee members, but as members bringing forward points about order in the church.

At point 12, there will be an opportunity for questions.

Thank you for your attendance.

2. MINUTES

Led by Steve Webster.

The minutes from the 2010 Annual Meeting have been available on website all year.

Motion: That the minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting be received.

Moved: Dianne Shay

Seconded: Lucy Watson

Further comments: None.

Result: Carried.

3. ELECTORAL ROLL

Led by Steve Webster.

That the latest version of the parish directory be received as the electoral roll for today's proceedings.

Moved: Cindy Shay

Seconded: Steve Manders

Result: Carried.

OTHER: INTRODUCTION TO REPORTS SECTION OF THE MEETING

By Steve Webster.

The annual reports are available with color pictures on the website. They're also here printed today.

4. VICAR'S REPORT

Given by Steve Webster.

My report is on page 3, the Vicar's report.

Vision

- We're at the close of the previous vision statement.

- It was the launch of the exploration of various activities, such as holding services at times other than 10am (e.g. closed 7pm service, started 5:30pm service).

Children's ministry

- People have been talking to each other, and to me, and there have been discussions at vestry. It is concerning people that there has been less frequency, and less families at 10am, and 5:30pm is not an attractive time or format for families.
- There are some comments on this in the report. There will be an opportunity for questions later in the meeting.
- There is money aside in budget for projects to renew, and reboot our young families' ministries. I would be delighted to talk to you about it.
- Vestry has approved a working party, to start from the first term of next year, and to report back to congregation with plans after Easter. This is a response to comments about the decline in families.
- I'd like to pay our tribute and give thanks to our Children's Church leaders: Jacqui and David Wagner. Each week when leaders turn up, they're not sure how many kids there'll be (none, or eight!), or what age. It's quite a challenge to prepare lessons that bring the good news of the gospel. So I'd like us to acknowledge the challenge of that.

Applause.

- Thanks to Sue Robinson and Deb Upton who, with myself, have been coordinators of Children's Church.

Locum

- Thanks to Richard Trist, who was the locum while Penne and I were away on long service leave for 7 weeks (it was a refreshing time).
- By all accounts, Richard did a great job. My job was 'in danger'!
- Richard did it while doing other jobs, being a husband and father as well.
- I'm really grateful that he offered to do it. Richard approached me and offered some months in advance.

Applause.

Support

- I'd also like to acknowledge the parish's support to my family.
- Penne has been ill, for the last two years with fibromyalgia and other ailments.
- More recently, she's had elective surgery on her leg and foot (unrelated to fibromyalgia). She's resting up in bed at the moment.
- She and I would like to thank the parish for your practical and prayerful support, and patience. It's a witness of the community of care.

We'll leave questions from my report or about any other ministries until the end of the meeting.

5. VESTRY REPORT

Included in handout. Not presented.

Opportunity for vestry members and churchwardens to make any comments.

Steve Webster makes the following comments.

Buildings

- We had buckets in the Wells' room as water poured in.

- David Wagner has agreed to be Project Officer regarding spending monies from a grant that has been approved from the JM Smith Trust. The works will be spread over three years, starting in 2012, on our buildings. 25% of the overall project costs will come from St Michaels own funds taking the total to over \$40, 000.
- You can see the cracks in the walls to your right.
- Also the unseen stress on the stained glass windows because of the movement of the foundations.
- Also the water damage to the sub-floor of the Wells Room.
- All of these are projects to be addressed over three years, starting in 2012. Talk to the churchwardens or David Wagner for more information. But we plan to attend to the flooding quickly.

Vestry

- On screen, you can see those who have served on vestry for the past 12 months (vestry photo board displayed). Perhaps you've had some interaction with them.
- Some are retiring, but there are no new members to be appointed today. So some are continuing, some are retiring, but no one is being added. That strikes me as interesting. I'd like to encourage people to take the initiative to nominate. We are growing in numbers, in terms of the people associated with the church, and we need representatives. One of the blessings of the Anglican Church is that any member can take part with the vicar in these important roles.
- Hilary Toppin, Sue Robinson, Su-Hsien Kuan and Peter Hutchinson are all retiring.
- Given the representation needed and the work required by our new vestry, the work will be spread thinner. There may be other ways you can be supportive of our vestry members. We will renew the photo board. Also, we will be forming working parties this year to develop areas of ministry and hoping to co-opt people into teams

Applause for retiring members.

6. AUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE CHURCHWARDENS

Receiving of the audited accounts was deferred until the end of the meeting so that members could read and comment.

7. MINISTRY REPORTS

Opportunity for any person present to speak about any church ministry.

Gardening

Brad Watson

- I'd like to take the opportunity as a member of vestry to thank the small group of people who have spent a large part of their serving here in maintaining the garden here that enables us to enjoy goodness of God's creation every Sunday.
- We may not see them, or be able to tap them on the shoulder and say thanks. I don't know them all. They are acknowledged in the vestry and warden reports.
- They'd like more people to participate in the maintenance and upkeep of the gardens: for us, and for people in North Carlton who walk past or use the facilities here, so that they can enjoy God's good creation.
- Hilary (Toppin), Bob (Lile), Audrey (Lile) and I would like to thank...*(names volunteered by a variety of people present)*...Sam Asquith, Stephen Asquith, Julie Bryson, Anne Jacques, Kay McGaw and any others who have contributed.

- If you are interested in working on the garden, mowing, painting fences, weeding, - come speak to me and I'd love to rope you in.

Steve Webster

- More generally, on page 16 of the reports, you will see the outcome of vestry discussions about property - a general policy about gardens and grounds.
- As we grow in numbers using the site (children and families for birthday parties, kinder, music activities – all sorts of people using the property)....And naturally, with no borders, children (including those of neighbours) play in the sandpit and often the garden beds. So, the whole property is used diversely.
- I encourage parishioners to flip the switch in attitude towards the property from where it has been. When you look at the garden, it's yours; it's ours. Although it's the responsibility of wardens and a few people working on it - If you see sandpit uncovered, cover it. If you see rubbish pick it up. If you see kids ripping plants parts apart – gently find a way to encourage parents to attend to changing that behavior. There are Memorial plots that are part of our history. It's a shared property. I want to launch these guidelines in your report document as a spirit of action together; rather than laws we might cross. Let's enjoy the property; something for everyone who comes here.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Given by Su-Hsien Kuan.

Accompanied by PowerPoint graphs, also in reports handout.

I was told to report in Herald Sun style! It's not easy. I don't have any exciting pictures.

In my report there are some key messages. They relate to messages on the board and to the rest of the report.

- There has been increased participation and direct giving, which has been really good, because it means we have assurance of what our income is going to be like, and we don't have to worry about whether we're going to see a drop in income as in the last three years.
- We've had appeals in previous years that have helped us meet our expenses and income. This year we haven't had to do an appeal.
- The absolute total that we have in income from direct and offertory giving has been about the same. But whereas in previous years we have had to have an appeal, this year we haven't had to because of increased direct giving. That's helpful for me from management perspective.
- Towards the end of last year, there were a few appeals to meet expenses. There was a debt carried over from last year, which the appeals have helped to meet. This year we were in a position to meet obligations from employment perspective, and from a planning perspective, so didn't have to vary much from the original planning.

Refers to graph on screen.

- So this is our income and expense distribution (also in the documents). Direct offertory is 55% of our income. Of our expenses, employment is 41%. The category 'miscellaneous' is a bucket term I use for all our transactional-type expenses: we had a couple of camps (main camp was \$9-10K). People pay money, we bundle it up, and pay for the camp. It's the same mechanism for the youth camp and men's retreat. Talking with the auditors, that's not the best way to manage things. Going forward, we will separate that out to create a cleaner account.

- Under 'miscellaneous' is also Cinti (Joule)'s salary payment, as well as the income that comes from, actually, last year, two groups – the prison and the school she was working at. So that's why it's a big category. About \$78K.
- From the mission giving perspective, we've given \$9368, roughly 5% of our income (i.e. hall rental and direct giving income). It looks small when set against our total income, however we calculate the 5% against our offerings and some other income, not those transactional lines.
- Our cash position is quite large. In previous years it has been about \$26K. It's partly because this year we were very cautious in our expenses. We didn't plan for a big expense budget. Also a couple of transactions were meant for last year but only came through this year: about \$12K in October/November. Improved direct giving has also helped that a lot as well. We've carried over expenses from men's retreat into next year. So some of the amount of money there is actually for the men's retreat
- The foyer loan has been reduced from \$130K to 109K, which is very much due to appeals, (raising about) \$15K to offset loan. From where we are at today, it will take 10 years to pay off the loan, if we don't do anything else except pay what we've said we would pay. There's been some discussion in vestry about the rate of repayment, but this needs to be balanced with ministry decisions, what we want to do this year.

We've finished up in a pretty good position. Our cash flow position: we have quite a lot of money in the bank. Our Income & Expense: \$28K on top. Practical planning has allowed us to put some money towards how to build up the Children's Ministry, agreed to in recent vestry meetings, so we've set aside some of our money to do that.

Refers to table on screen.

This is our budget plan for next year, this year we're in already. There's some amount of transactional income that I cannot foresee, so I haven't included that. It's a budget of \$253K which includes projections for Cinti (Joule), and projections of \$10,931 from the Smith Fund, of which the church actually has to contribute 25% towards the works. The Smith Fund gives us \$32K, and we have to contribute 25%, so it's a sum total of \$40K. On the expense side, our parish assessment will grow. As part of an audit recently, our bookkeeper calculated our parish assessment for us, and it has grown by about \$5K. The sum you see there is what we anticipate we will have to pay for the assessment. We've seen growth in other things, like utilities (5% increase), also provisioning for Smith Fund projects. There are projects actually funded from the excess this year, so they're not part of our expense; they're actually funded separately. I've left it to the new treasurer to work out how she wants to manage that. Other increases have been around employment expenses: some provisions for an additional student minister and the verger for this year – Steve will speak to that later.

Refers to screen.

These are principles we've applied in planning the budget, our financial management. There are short-term levers, such as delaying building projects, and appeals. But in my experience, I've very rarely been able to ask and receive from the than 5% relief money. Long-term levers involve planning 3-5 years ahead (i.e. ministry planning, in line with the vision).

Some final notes for consideration: It's important to have a multi-year vision and strategy, and that includes financial planning – loan repayment, ministry planning (e.g. the children's ministry, which takes time; it doesn't just happen), staff development, and future leader development should be included as part of the financial plan.

Steve Webster responds.

Su-Hsien asked for no gifts, but for three years she has been a faithful treasurer. It's always dangerous to have a happy treasurer. I'm used to grumpy treasurer who's sad about people not giving enough. So it's time for her to go! I'd like to thank her for her work, for being a colleague on vestry, for her new ideas (she always shoots me emails with new ideas, new tools from her work). Thanks for many hours, humour, reforms to our financial reporting, good red wine, good prayer and faith that's come with your ministry to us.

applause

Motion: That the audited reports be received as accurate.

Moved: Dianne Shay

Seconded: Christine Hayward

Further comments: None.

Result: Carried.

Thanks to our auditors Shelley Knight, Shoi Tsung. Shelley, it's not an enviable task auditing church accounts, but we really thank you for the effort you've put in.

8. BUILDING REPORT

(incorporated in churchwardens & vestry report)

9. ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS AND VESTRY

Led by Steve Webster.

Refers to PowerPoint.

On screen, you'll see the elected and appointed nominees for vestry. There's one person I nominate - Shelley Knight. Wardens should note that Shelley is willing to be the treasurer. (Wardens appoint the treasurer.) You can thank her. Cindy Shay is my appointment as warden. The other two have been nominated and are duly elected.

Vestry members stand.

Applause as the meeting receives nominees as new vestry and wardens.

Vestry and churchwardens

Brad Watson (churchwarden)

Cindy Shay (vicar's warden)

Paul Robison (churchwarden)

Tony Jones

Catherine Merry

Steve Manders

Peter Alsen

Sharyn Young

Shelley Knight (vicar's appointment)

10. ELECTION OF AUDITORS

Led by Steve Webster.

As in previous years, we have deferred the election of auditors so that we can do it in vestry. I suggest we do so, so that we can find people who are willing to do it. It comes into operation in October next year.

Referred to vestry.

11. ELECTION OF INCUMBENCY COMMITTEE

Led by Steve Webster.

There are two nominees, to be joined by one warden in the even of an incumbency vacancy. Dianne Shay and Chris Ward are the nominees, duly appointed.

Applause to receive nominees as representatives on incumbency committee.

12. OTHER MATTERS

Questions and comments taken from the floor.

Richard Trist

Thanks Su-Hsien Kuan for her work as treasurer. I have a question about finances. As someone who has lived in a vicarage, (I note that) only \$1K was spent on the vicarage in the past 12 months. I wonder how many of us have only spent \$1K, you need to keep (investing). I'd ask wardens if they've audited the vicarage, and if any money can be set aside from our budget for that.

Cindy Shay responds.

We have a works list. Works are categorized, (including) as 'urgent', which means within a certain time frame they will become urgent, or that they must be done as part of maintenance). We have done a list. As you know, if you haven't done things, they become urgent sooner rather than later.

David Wagner

I just noticed in the reports \$13K for building maintenance, but we heard differently in the slideshow and presentation earlier. Can you explain?

Su-Hsien Kuan looks at documents and clarifies that one figure includes utilities expenses.

Cindy Shay

Perhaps we could put into our pewsheet what our maintenance list looks like (e.g. to redo kitchen in Williams Hall).

Roslyn Loader

In expenses, what kind of ministries come under the 'evangelism and mission' \$11K?

Su-Hsien Kuan responds.

(not clear what the response was)

Dianne Shay responds.

The expenses include the art show.

Barbara Sterner

Could we have a hardcopy of the budget?

Steve Webster responds.

Thank you. It is in the handout.

Barbara's was missing the final page.

Richard Trist

The budget has a direct offertory 2.5% increase for next year – how will that be achieved? Is it through new people, or is it us who are already giving that way to give more? I personally think that's a bit conservative, given the ministry we are capable of doing. I encourage us all to give 5% more. From my time as locum, I sensed that the loan on the foyer is weighing us down.

We're chipping away at it slowly, despite the appeals. Rather than repay it over 10 years, we could knock it over now, celebrate, then get on with the ministry.

Steve Webster responds.

Thank you. Your comments will be discussed in vestry. How will the 2.5% be achieved?

- Firstly, 5:30pm is nascent, still-growing, and no appeal has been made as yet to bring people into giving.
- Only 55% of income is through direct giving. I think it should be 70%. It's not about the amount, but about the level of participation. It would help vestry to know the level of income.
- If attendance is becoming infrequent, the offertory bowl is insufficient for ministry. It's a good symbol of worship, and still picks up hundreds per year, but it's not enough for achieving our goals. Direct giving (is preferred). We could achieve a 2.5% increase in a week if just a few people decided to do that.
- Vestry will discuss foyer repayment.

Peter Summers

On the foyer, those of us outside the vestry, we hear about the foyer loan every 12 months - where it's up to. Can we hear about it more often to generate enthusiasm?

Steve Webster responds.

Thanks. We have communicated this more than ever this year, e.g. at the fundraising dinner, and we had four or five weeks of notices in a row. The issue is that it's when we meet like this that we focus on the issue, rather than when it's in the pewsheet or announcements. If I can speak on your behalf, most of you believe that there is someone running the church well and are not so concerned about matters of debt. But the vestry will take on board that you want to have that (about the foyer loan) communicated more often.

Suggestion made by Maryanne Lyttle that we have a 'thermostat' visual representation of the state of our loan repayment and fundraising.

Lucy Watson

A question not about finances: One thing that drew us here was the way young children and youth have been looked after, so we're devastated to hear about the reduction in families. Is there a plan to address that issue? What can I do to help?

Steve Webster responds.

Thank you. We will report plans through vestry early in the New Year. We've set aside \$10K in the new budget, not to employ a staff member, but to set out a platform that might include staffing in the future. Money will go towards 'research' and planning (e.g. to change users of the hall - to have more young families on site). At the moment, there's almost zero contact between members and young families who hire the halls. A no brainer is to work out contact between our members and those entering the property. There are no RE teachers at Princes Hill Primary School. Do we want to do that? Is that an effective way? I'm anticipating we'll report by Easter. There'll be a project officer with a small group of people - some have already been co-opted - with the help of vestry. If you have any prayers, ideas, interests, talk to vestry.

Glenda Trist

Is there a more easy way of consultation? I'm concerned that we might own the children's ministry, not just have the vestry come and tell us what we can do.

Steve Webster responds.

Definitely. I'll take that on board. Some of the things we can do, apart from having meetings at the end of services, is having a survey through the parish about what it's like raising children, and what makes it easier.

Jamie Bourne

We have a three-year-old and have been coming here for four years continuously. We've seen lots of children leave. What does the church have in place to encourage children to come? You talk about strategy and vestry, but I feel like it's too long.

Steve Webster responds.

Thank you. I've followed up on many families pastorally. But, immediately? We need Children's church leaders. We need people who are willing to prepare but not know who's going to turn up on the day. Nominally, we have a group for grades 3 to 6. But we have nothing structured for pre-schoolers at present, primarily due to a lack of numbers. We want to make children's ministry fit for all children in the New Year. I'm happy to talk people about what we can do.

Caroline Blackburn

A later start for 10am service, perhaps 10:30 (would be good). It takes time to get children organized.

Steve Webster responds.

Thanks. That could be part of survey. Some think we already do have a 10:30 service!

David Fuller

About long-term goals, generally, one full time person is considered appropriate for a congregation of approx. 80-100. If we want to grow, we have to grow our staff in base. Can we expect to get by with one full time and a bucket of lay people?

Steve Webster responds

Su-Hsien Kuan has encouraged vestry to do a 3-5 year staffing plan alongside the new vision.

Nicola Reynolds

Excuse me if I missed any detail here. Steve, you mentioned 'going forward' and the vision. Can you talk a bit about that, and how will that be disseminated?

Steve Webster responds.

There are several elements of how we'll approach the vision statement. The one we adopted three years ago was a fairly lengthy process. A matter of congregational meetings, vestry visiting small groups, and vestry discussion to distil down to 8-9 points to be approached in a 3-4 year period. This time there'll be a similar opportunity with Sunday services, small groups, in writing, and maybe on the vestry retreat going away early in the year. We'll receive results from NCLS early in the year and that will dovetail in nicely...about where God is directing us for the second term of next year.

Su-Hsien Kuan

How do you see that the rest of the congregation can contribute to the vision?

Steve Webster responds.

One of the first and foremost aspects is facilitating prayer that is directed to that end. That is one way you can participate. We'll work out some ways to inform prayers. Certainly any way that you think God is challenging us, I'd like to hear about it. There'll be visionary meetings in February and March. There might be questionnaires to fill out, or you might be a person who

sits down and writes a long email to me, or we could have a coffee, or a prayer time together. In the end, vestry and I will sit down to work it out.

Nicola Reynolds

I've become aware in the last months of the growing and distinct role that the 5:30pm service is playing. Having teenage daughters ourselves, it's an important part of expressing their faith. Notwithstanding comments about young families in the morning, it's an encouragement to see our daughters grow in faith.

Steve Webster responds.

Thank you.

Steve Webster concludes.

The spirit of the conversation we've just had we should extend. Let me say, I'm not too busy. We all have the same amount of time - it's how we use it. Arrange a time with me, or talk to me at morning tea. Vestry members would love to do that too. It would make their role more meaningful. It's hard to make communications work well in this kind of group. We don't have a communications budget! (Although, we did have 40,000 sermons downloaded! – the most downloads were for a sermon by Greg Davies. Though Su-Hsien tells me most hits were by search robots!)

About the urgency of care for families: if you're rostered on for public prayers, make it part of your prayers; if you're part of a small group, make it part of the conversation; if you know a family not attending regularly, ask them what would make it easier for them.

Steve Webster invites people to lay hands on vestry members, and then prays.

Directories are here if you want to take one.

12:30pm Meeting closed.

Minute-taker: Nonie Flynn