

Church Annual General Meeting

1: Meeting started at 7:30

2: Worship and Prayer: Tati and Jay

3: Peter Abrahams. Admin

Prayer for Alan and Margaret Thompson. Margaret is chair of CLT, however absent tonight because Alan's mother passed away. We are pressing ahead in her absence, but paused to pray for the family.

Voting explanations

Chair – Josh Hollis

Scribe – Erika Matruglio

Scrutineers – Elyse Mascera, Drew and Lisa Coulson, Samantha Bryce

There was a Quorum: confirmed by Jan Reardon

4: Resolution: the minutes of the 2024 be accepted

Moved by Ian Grey, seconded by Sophie Brodie – motion carried

5: Looking Back

a) Ben Rusin delivers the report on 2025: *Looking back on 2025*

- New partners are introduced (over 30 new partners).
- The year has been one of transition but also one of preparation for what is ahead
- We have been intentional this year about becoming a people of prayer
- We have grown in every single space this year. People at new people's lunch repeatedly said that we are a people who want to follow Jesus.
- Lifecare: exceeded every goal it had for 2025, in new and renewed grants, in fundraising, and in people reached. Celebrating the blurring of the lines between Lifecare and Life Church. More people this year have taken the leap from having a need met to encountering a community.
- Talked a lot about discipleship
- We are encouraged to share a highlight from the year.
- Thank yous: the CLT, the staff team, the partners, God.

b) Josh invites Nik Karanikas to give a presentation on the finance and audit

- Thanksgiving for the faithfulness of our church
- We have been slightly behind all year but we have been very consistent
- Less than 5% behind the budget
- We lost an excellent operations manager, a senior pastor, several changes in the finance committee, and three treasurers, but despite all this we have had stability

- WRT *actual* giving, we are ahead of where we were last year, even though we are in transition: we are in a healthy position
- We will end the year with a surplus of between 80-110k
- Our salary costs have been well below budget, income from ministry is up, our giving to mission is healthy and we have been well contained in a number of areas.
- Our audit found no significant management issues

c) Questions are invited by Josh WRT the report on budget – no questions

Motion to accept the audit accounts, finance reports and ministry report

Moved by Bruce Stevenson, seconded by Matt Grey

Carried

6: Thank yous: Ben Rusin

thank yous to David Seeto and Nik Karanikas

These men are finishing up their terms on the CLT. The significance of the role is emphasised and the sacrifices they have made while they led on the CLT and also on the finance committee are acknowledged and deeply appreciated.

Site pastors are invited up to pray for David and Nik.

7: CLT updates: Jan Reardon

Update 1

- Constitutional Review. We needed to review our legal structures first. Constitution needs to match our organisational structure
- The constitution was written in 1997 – we now have a much more complicated church structure, more assets, bigger budget
- Unincorporated association, but there are limitations – personal liability risk (CLT members carry personal responsibility), legal restraints – church can't enter contracts, own property or apply for grants in its own name
- Structure is designed for small organisations not a church the size that we are
- Company limited by guarantee is the best path forward – brings protection against liability, allow us to own property and to hold grants, while still holding our identity as part of the Baptist Union
- Feb and March 0 info sessions
- Proposal to be brought forward for voting at the next ACM
- This is all to do with administration and has nothing to do with doctrine

Update 2

- Moving ACM to May to June date – best practice for accounting practice
- Our financial year runs from Feb to Dec – so we are approving financials that are almost a year old. ACM should be held 3 months after audit completion

8. CLT Affirmation and Nominations

Peter Abrahams, Karen Hewitt, Jan Reardon, Bronwyn Thornton, Bruce Stevenson, Margaret Thompson

Bruce and Margaret have reached the end of their first 3 year term and are proposed to be reappointed.

Ben Rusin spoke to Bronwyn's character

Bronwyn Thornton is a completely new appointee. Been part of our church since Sept 1995. Has been involved serving in many different roles. Part of Lifecare launch and also part of Chipping Norton site launch. Serves others, prayerful, generous in encouragement, prayerful. Church leadership team want to strongly advocate for her to join the CLT.

9. 2026 Plan

a) Looking Forward - Ben

- Ben wants us to feel the spirit stirring
- Ben's priority to tune in to God and to listen to us for what God is saying to us
- This year is not just a year of transition but God has been preparing us for what is next
- People have heard words such as 'It's time to go again,' and 'We have permission to go, to grow, and to start the next chapter'
- 'Be strong and be courageous' – Ben feels that this is a personal word to him about us. We are called to have courage, say yes to Jesus and leave the nets behind as we follow Jesus. Our courage flows from being a people who abide in Jesus
- Ben feels we are being called to be courageous not because things are going to be difficult but so that we don't miss what Jesus has in store for us.
- We are reminded of when the people of Israel crossed into the promised land – we have been remembering God's faithfulness, becoming more dependent on God, stepping forward in faith

Staff team plans for 2026

- Continuation of our journey already: focus on mission, formation, prayer.
- Begin next year in book of Psalms
- Staff will undergo a mini-restructure in term 1
- From mid year we will step into a season the staff team have been wrestling with for a few years. The main conversation will be what does it look like to step into life in the fullness of maturity with God, practices, rhythms and relationships to support us to follow Jesus wholeheartedly with all our lives
- *Key initiative*: Partner nights – when do we all gather together as ONE CHURCH? Partner nights will be special gatherings to pursue God together. Reminiscent of encounter nights.

- *Key initiative:* Toward the end of next year we will gather together around planning for our third site. Our first step will be praying together about where, when and how for our next site. Acknowledgment that there will be different reactions to this idea.
- *Key initiative:* God has entrusted us with a large amount of leadership potential in our congregation. Next year we will be slowly implementing a leadership pipeline to empower everyone – leadership huddles, leadership conference, opening up expressions of interest for emerging leaders program for 18-29 year olds – a kind of gap year program to be trained up for leadership.

b) Nik Karanikas

- Proposing a budget with an increase of 5%
- We are believing for revival and growth. The budget reflects that faith
- Planning for a surplus of 50k
- Giving target set to \$1,050,000, 15k ministry and development investment, increased provision for building maintenance by 25k
- Budgeting for staff costs to be 10k less than last year

C) Questions are invited about next year's budget

Question about when we have the annual meeting in June. Will this mean we will be looking back at this budget that we are approving now?

Answer: Not necessarily but it will give us the opportunity to revisit it if we need to .

Question about where the surplus will be allocated.

Answer: No specific area but it is intended to go toward the growth in the church. The hope is that it will go back onto mission. Perhaps it will go towards the third site, perhaps the building, but no specific target area – it's really for mission and growth

d: Motion to approve the 2026 budget

Andrew Sharp, seconded by Bruce Stevenson

Motion carried

10: Announcement that all the CLT members have been affirmed

11: Karen Hewitt closes in prayer

12: Closing

a) Call made for other business

no other business

Meeting closed at 9:09

