

# St George's Church Parktown

## MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING

Held at 10h45 on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### Present:

The Revd. Eben Grobbelaar (Chairman)

Siviwe Dongwana (Churchwarden)

David Barnes (Churchwarden)

Neo Dongwana (Treasurer)

Nomawethu Dingiswayo (Secretary)

### Parishioners:

Michelle Baird, Marnus Greyling, Ronald & Janet Unterslak, Marguerite Langton, Lungelo Nyoka, Sam Mlambo, Yvette Angoma, Gilly Pirow, Peter & Mary Campbell, John Schultz, Pearl & Gerard Sharp, Zandile Mxoli, Yoli Tshetshe, Linda de Villiers, Naufal George, Teressa George, Esther Pooe, Nick Prince, Uzukhanye Ngwabeni, Colin Robinson, Anthony Arbuthnot, Rumbidzai Mawela, Lethlogonolo Mogase, Daniel de Carcenac, Bataung Khakhau, Liza Harkess, Deborah Marsicano, Ron White, Strilli Oppenheimer, Yvette Angoma, Lebogang Shole, Neo Dongwana.

### 1. Opening Prayer and Welcome.

Revd Eben opened the meeting with a prayer and welcomed all present.

Siviwe Dongwana and Revd Eben confirmed that a quorum was present.

### 2. Apologies:

Nobuntu Mpendulo, James van den Heever, Cora Hoexter, Christine Botha, Zuko & Lungile Khoza, Paul Edey, Badanile Tsita, Barney Tsita, Jenny Viljoen, Nigel Willis Richard Nevin, Sanda Rasoamahenina, Nirisoa Rasamijuo, Thapelo Tshenkeng, Trevor & Boo Taylor, Ramsay Brierley, Peggy Chapman, Derrick & Dawn De Jongh, , Elsbeth Louw, Gwen Shole, Busi Shole, Paul Edey, Grant & Rosemary Nupen, Gordon & Penny Brodie, Christine Lowick, Lydia Monyepao, Yvonne Norwood-Young, Elizabeth Davidson.

### 3. Appointment of Secretary

Revd Eben proposed that Nomawethu Dingiswayo take the minutes of the meeting. Vestry agreed.

### 4. Appointment of Scrutineers

Revd Eben explained that there will be no need for scrutineers since only one person was nominated for each portfolio. Vestry Agreed

## 5. Confirmation of Minutes of 2020 Vestry Meeting

Revd Eben explained that the minutes for the 2020 were confirmed as correct by the Parish Council since we did not have vestry because we had lockdown during Covid, so per Diocese directive we were not allowed to hold vestry for year 2021.

Proposed by Colin Robinson and seconded by John Schultz. Vestry agreed.

## 6. Presentation by Churchwardens of Verified Annual Accounts.

Siviwe made a correction that the financials are verified not audited.

The Verified Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2021 and the Report of the Independent Verifier were tabled, and are attached to these minutes. Siviwe Dongwana, churchwarden, presented the statements and commented that they were posted on the church door on the previous Sunday as required, and emailed to parishioners.

He then proceeded to highlight relevant details as follows:

The Balance Sheet represents a fairly accurate record of the financial position of the Parish as at the 31st December 2021, and the Income and Expenditure statement fairly represents the financial activities of the Parish for the same period;

- He clarified a disclaimer, being that the income is not verified, as it is not possible to do so. Collections are counted, verified and recorded on a weekly basis on Sunday by a team of parishioners, and banked.
  
- **Income:**
  - Total income of R2,4 million was received, which was a slight increase to the R2,365,000 received in the previous year, the bulk of which came from a slightly lower Dedicated Giving, effectively reflecting a flat income progression under difficult Covid conditions.
  
- **Expenses**
  - There had been an extensive exercise in 2020 to bring the expenses to a low base, and to ensure adequate control of the expenses by the Parish, thereby saving a lot of money;
  - A significant amount of money had been saved through the exercise, working on repairs and maintenance, and the Parish had been active in this regard in spite of the challenges of the time.
  
- **The Balance Sheet:**
  - Total reserves remains relatively flat at R12,3million, declining from R12,7 million in 2020.
  - The Property check list and detailed report on Fixed Assets is attached at the end of the financials;
  - Cash available in terms of current account was R1.4million at the end of December 2021 relative to R1.8million the previous year;
  - R376,000 current liabilities lower than the previous year's R424,000.
  - Net current account was R1million of the assets above the liabilities.

Comments/Questions:

- Marguerite wanted to know why does the church pay so little tax.
- Neo explained that in the year 2020 provision had been made for tax at R22,000, and the provision for 2021 had been R8,000. However, an amount of R7,000 was paid for the year 2021. Consequently

R20,000 had been reversed. The church pays tax on rentals income only, and on average the tax payable was around R8,000 - R10,000.

Proposed by Peter Campbell and seconded by Gerard Sharp the acceptance of the Verified Annual Accounts. Vestry Agreed

## **7. Report by Churchwardens on the condition of the Church property. (As per attached)**

a. Siviwe presented the report and highlighted the following:

- State of property
- Stewardship report:
  - Building and records
  - All building has been properly maintained
  - Provision had been made for the insurance of the building and assets of the Parish.
- Property check list:-
  - Section -A highlights all buildings that the Parish have and use.
  - Section-B notes the properties the parish have, that are rented out to third party , 409 Apex as well as the Cottage/flat in the church grounds.
  - Section-C states that we have the Church building, Office block, Rector, Flat, Cottage and 409 Apex flat additionally noting the state or condition of the walls, ceiling , roof, gardens, facilities etc:
  - Section-D Is there anything concerning the state of the property that you would wish to bring to the attention of the Diocesan Trustees?
    - Rectory roof building maintenance has been completed and the verger flat.
    - Six new garden lights has been installed to the Garden of Remembrance
    - Church roof and Bell tower intersection leaks from rain storms Crack were repaired.
    - The leached gate has been renovated by Richard Causton and the original rock floor grouting refurbished.
    - Brand treefellers removed extensive tree and bush over growth from the perimeter walls of the church property.
    - Telkom installed a 10m poll to support our new data cables.

Siviwe acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the role played by David Barnes in ensuring that all maintenance was performed with diligence, using his time generously.

David Barnes informed the meeting that the vehicle fund of R640,000 had been transferred to the Building and maintenance fund, in view of the directive by the Diocese to cancel the provision of motor vehicles to the clergy. Just over half of the amount had been used towards the repairs and renovations of the church property, primarily the fixing of cracks on the Lady Chapel, since no foundation was used invite building.

The leached gate had also developed cracks, but had been repaired. It was also noted that about R340,000 remains available for future maintenance and repairs.

Proposed by John Schultz and seconded by Ronald Unterslak the acceptance of the Condition of Church Property Report. Vestry agreed.

## **8. Report by the Rector on the Care and Needs of the parish. (As per attached)**

- Revd Eben expressed his delight in working with the Parish Council, Church Wardens, Clergy and the office staff.
- He further expressed appreciation for the parishioners who had through generosity ensured that the church had access to top class IT equipment for the electronic dissemination of the church work, especially the services and rich musical heritage.
- St George's music still needs improving and a lot of credit goes to Marnus for the good quality of music through his hard work.
- Livestreaming of services had also made it possible for those who are still at home and not being able to come to church, to access the services.
- Youth Development was going to play a key role in ensuring growth, and plans were afoot to get the parish youth to visit the Diocese of Zambia on a missions trip.
- Missions and Discipleship remained pivotal in the clergy's vision to grow the Parish, and it was important for every member of the church to be involved.
- The impact of Covid was minimal with only two services being disrupted during the lockdown, and stability was maintained.
- The clergy puts a high premium on Youth development in the Parish, based on the belief that the church reflects the future of our society, in accordance with the mission of reaching out;
- The Administration function is important to give the clergy sufficient time to attend to pastoral work
- The Financial Accounting function was being outsourced, to ensure efficiency and accountability.
- The Youth Pastor Yvette had resigned, and there was a need to fill the position, which helps with the clergy being able to deal with other pastoral care.
- Every member of the parish needs to get involved in the work at hand.

### Comments:

- Linda wanted to know why there is a hole in the garden.
- Eben explained that this is a garden of remembrance for those departed during Covid period and will have a girl child sculpture erected.
- Linda also wanted to know if names of those who passed away during Covid will be included.
- Revd Eben responded that a special place would be prepared at a later stage for the names of those dearly departed to be put up.

Proposed by Neo Dongwana and seconded by Gerard Sharp seconded the acceptance of the Rector's Report. Vestry agreed.

## **9. Presentation by the Churchwardens of the Budget for the ensuing year. (See attached budget)**

Siviwe Dongwana highlighted the following items from the budget: we were asked to do two revisions on the budget on the last two years during the Covid lockdown by the Diocese. The Budget was very conservative.

- **Income**

- Dedicated Giving was R1 798,293 and reflected a decline, but had been higher than the budgeted R1,700,000.
- Income from Property was R198,800 and had decreased from the previous year, when it was R213 000.
- Total income budgeted is R2,275 170 which is 2% up on 2021.
- **Expenditure** of R3 m
- Staff cost
- Clergy and retirement all sitting in different buckets

This has generally been increased in line with inflation, but the following must be noted:

- Expenses are going to be R2,700,500 against income of R2,400,500.
- The expenses have also increased since the parish had appointed a full-time priest.
- **Deficit**
- The budget shows a deficit of R1 256,000 for the year. Therefore the parish needs to find ways of increasing income seriously.

Dedicated Giving: ( as per attached)

Daniel as the DG director to also extend thanks to everyone for their contributions, and lamented the shrinking base of people who contributed to DG, raising concern on the sustainability

- The total contribution had gone up, in spite of the number donors declining (15 in the past year);
- It's going to be necessary to grow the donor base, and close a 15% gap: the challenge remained - how;
- The past year top green bars sustain the church and the appeal is to increase the monthly donors or donation
- We only managed because of cost savings.

Comment:

- Marguerite Langton wanted to know if we are still able to claim tax on the contributions that parishioners contribute to donate.
- David Barnes explained that Sydney Place had explained that PBO has two types of tax section. Section a 18 certificate which does not apply to the church.
- To a follow up question, David Barnes added that there is no other reprieve available.
- Neo explained that the church is not taxed with the income the church gets and are only taxed on the rental income. It is therefore not possible to get a tax rebate for donors.

Proposed by David Barnes and seconded by John Schultz the acceptance of the Proposed Budget for 2022.

Vestry agreed

### **Clustering of St John's Houghton:**

Revd Eben explained that the Diocese had approached St George's to help to do pastoral care and services at St John's Houghton, but it looks like they will be closing the church and they will join St George's.

There had been an influx of especially youth from St John's.

Ron White is one of the church warden from St John's.

Comment:

David Barnes related the experience of the Church of England, which indicated that the churches that have a fulltime rector have a better chance of sustainability.

### **10. A decision by Vestry on the number of persons who will serve on Council:**

Revd Eben confirmed that we have ten members nominated to serve on Council. Vestry agreed.

### **11. Election of Churchwardens and Parish Council for the ensuing year.**

#### **a. Parish Council and Churchwardens nominations:**

- The following persons were nominated as Churchwardens and members of the Parish Council as per the nomination lists.

#	Portfolio	Name	Proposed by:	Seconded by:
1	Churchwarden	Michelle Baird	Samukelisiwe Mlambo	Yolisa Tshetshe
2	Churchwarden	Zuko Khoza	Busi Shole	Janet Unterslak
3	Alternate Churchwarden	John Schultz	Lindiwe Mponda	Richard Nevin
4	Treasurer (ex officio)	Samukelisiwe Mlambo	Lindiwe Mponda	Palesa Dingiswayo
5	Music Director	Marnus Greyling	Gilly Pirow	Ronald Unterslak
6	Director of Dedicated Giving	Teressa George	Christine Botha	Ronald Unterslak
7	Social Outreach/Pastoral Care	Nobuntu Mpendulo	Gwen Shole	Zandile Mxoli
8	Children and Youth Ministry	Christine Botha	Janet Unterslak	Gwen Shole
9	Worship	Ronald Unterslak	Zuko Khoza	Zandile Mxoli
10	Media & Marketing	Yolisa Tshetshe	Michelle Baird	Barney Tsita

Proposed by Gerard Sharp and seconded Janet Unterslak by the acceptance of all the nominations for the Churchwardens. Vestry Agreed.

**12. Appointment of Auditor or Independent Verifier for ensuing year.**

- the Independent Verifier for 2022 will be elected by the Diocese.  
Vestry agreed.

Eben thanked all the council members for all the work that was done during the difficult circumstance of Covid. Also thanked the parishioners for the financial help and coming to worship with us.

Eben apologised for not being able to print the vestry reports.

**13. Closure**

Revd Eben declared the meeting adjourned. The meeting was closed with the Grace at 12h06.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

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**Chairman: Revd Eben Grobbelaar**

**Date** .....