

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

## Discovery Church Auditorium

**DATE:** Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**TIME:** 4:45pm – Registration  
5:00pm – Meeting commenced  
6:55pm – Meeting concluded

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### **WELCOME (Jody Destry)**

Jody gave a brief overview on how the evening would run and led all present in grace for the coming meal. She introduced Stephen Tinsley, Chair of the Board of Elders, acknowledging his contribution to the Eldership and articulated what a privilege it was to serve with him.

### **ITEM 1: CHAIR OF ELDERS' REPORT (Stephen Tinsley)**

Stephen thanked the AGM participants for attending the night. He affirmed the Elders and asked the people attending to show appreciation via a round of applause.

Stephen shared about the difficulties in navigating 2021, as the church resumed in-person gatherings on-site through continued COVID restrictions. He commended the staff for the amazing job they did through a difficult time and all they had to cope with including lots of additional changes and stresses.

Stephen shared that the Elders continued with the process of dreaming about the church's future direction and shape. They reviewed the facilities and considered how the property could be utilised for the benefit of the community. Part of this was commissioning a report on 89 & 91 Monbulk Road.

He expressed his appreciation for Matt's contribution in creating a space for the Elders to share vision and begin the discernment process. This process is very much a work in progress with the expressed desire to be a blessing to our wider community, our children, and our children's children. This included an acknowledgment that the journey would be difficult and not straight forward.

Since the Special Partner's meeting - where partners approved the prospect of purchasing a new site for the Op Shop - various properties have been assessed, but nothing has progressed to date. Stephen expressed his anticipation at Discovery Community Care relocating to the church's property. He acknowledged the significant outlay that had gone into the Beresford Road site, but was encouraged about the big-picture investment into God's kingdom, as Elisha Care have taken over the lease and they operate with kingdom values and a community focus.

## **ITEM 2: ACCEPTANCE OF LAST YEAR'S AGM MINUTES (Stephen Tinsley)**

**Moved:** Saskia Van Schie

**Seconded:** Matt Destry

***Approved.***

## **ITEM 3: FINANCIAL REPORT (Beck Lambert)**

Beck opened by expressing the privilege it is to serve on staff at Discovery and help in stewarding the finances entrusted to the team by the Partners. She paid tribute to the Elders including Matt and Jody for their care and engagement as a group and how supportive they are of her in her role as Executive Pastor.

Beck then drew out some statistics from audited financials:

- Tithes decreased 9.6% in 2021 from 2020.
- 82% of income came from Tithes and Offerings.
- Vision Offering went from strength to strength with an increase on 2020 to \$140,817.
- Capital Expenditure mainly focused on increasing tech capabilities due to online service needs.
- The large deficit of \$505k recorded for 2021 was significantly made up of \$205k of depreciation, which was anticipated, but also \$204k in a doubtful debt provision against the loan to DCC. This was the result of the discontinuation of the lease by DCC at Beresford Road which required the write-down of the leasehold asset at the premises.
- Other contributing factors were the lower than anticipated incomes in the café and Treasure Corner Op Shop due to lockdowns and significant restrictions on gatherings. This contrasts to the year prior where we achieved a net surplus of \$300k due to significant government subsidies – an experience many business owners may be able to relate to: that the subsequent years of the pandemic were more challenging than 2020.

Beck summarised her report by reflecting that despite it being a tougher year for the books, we remain really well positioned for the future with a strong asset to liability ratio and a core of faithful and generous givers as we enquire of the Lord how best to steward all He has given us into our next season.

## **ITEM 4: RATIFY ANNUAL REPORT (Stephen Tinsley)**

There was a show of hands to ratify the Annual Report.

***Ratified.***

## **ITEM 5: PARTNERS INVITED TO ASK QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE ANNUAL REPORT**

No questions

## **ITEM 6: VISION OFFERING 2022 UPDATE (Jody Destry)**

Jody shared that to the date of the AGM, the Vision Offering was at \$171,000 which is up \$30,000 from last year. She reflected on how she shared with the church in February that God revealed it was going to be “by faith year” and Vision Offering is a great example of that.

Jody reminded the church that we are benefiting from those who have gone before us – and that we are called to good stewardship for the generations to come. As in Isaiah 54:2 we are encouraged to expand our tent pegs. Jody shared how it was a 3 three-fold expansion of the Heart, Leadership, and of the Church.

## **ITEM 7 SENIOR MINISTER'S REPORT AND VISION (Matt Destry)**

Matt began by highlighting 3 scriptures, one from the OT, one from Proverbs, and one from the NT:

1 Sam 14:6

Prov 21:31

1 Cor 3 :5-9

All these scriptures demonstrate that while we, as believers are responsible for the action, God is always responsible for the outcome. We plant, we water but God makes the plant grow. Matt posed the question of what happens when the outcome we get is not the outcome we want. The answer is that obedience is greater than the outcome. Matt then affirmed each action of obedience in discipleship and mission that Discovery Church would always do as we outwork our vision of Every Heart Found in Jesus' Story.

Moving to the future outworking of our vision, Matt began to explain The Legacy Project and the 3 L's, **Location**, (Mt Evelyn and the Yarra Ranges), our **Leverage**, (the gifts of every believer) and our **Land**, (how the stewardship of our property can serve Location and Leverage). He explained how for the past few years there has been a process of discernment with prayer, property reports and meetings on the best way our property might be able to be developed to create a community hub; a place that can help the hurting in our community, rather than having a facility that is solely designed for Sunday use.

The Property, Condition Assessment and Capital Expenditure Forecast report conducted by KPMG Property Consultants in December 2020 showed that to maintain our current facility over the next 10 years would cost us in excess of \$3 million. Additionally, there are fire, disability and structural integrity issues that will need to be addressed.

Weighing up the costs versus the opportunities for both maintaining our current facilities, and the potential to redevelop and create a true community hub has been a push/pull decision.

Moving on to the next steps, Matt invited the Partners to begin to dream, explaining that the process of redeveloping our site would be a consultative process across all demographics of the church as well as in the community of Mt Evelyn and the Yarra Ranges. This process would begin shortly.

Some of the areas covered in these consultative conversations will be:

- What is our vision for future ministries?
- What facilities will be required to enable these ministries?
- How do we best utilise the Lemon Farm (91 Monbulk Road)?
- Identifying new opportunities (this may look like respite or refuge accommodation, Aged Care, child care, an arts centre, education centre etc.)

In conclusion Matt quoted Revelation 1:9a "I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus..."

- The journey will require patience
- We are in this together
- It will be harder than we think but more joyful than we can imagine

The Kingdom Legacy – that fifty years from now, the church of 2072, would be grateful that we were good and faithful stewards today.

Matt finished by leading the Partners in prayer.

## **BREAK FOR DINNER**

### **ITEM 8: QUESTION TIME WITH PANEL (Jody Destry, Matt Destry, Beck Lambert, Stephen Tinsley, Jonathan Baker)**

After asking the Elders and Property Committee to stand so that the Partners could identify each group, Stephen Tinsley invited questions about the Legacy Project.

#### **KEY:**

*Q - Question number and name of person posing the question*

*S - Statement number and name of person giving statement*

#### **Q1. Rob Leggett**

**Q1a.** Has a cost benefit analysis been run – regarding renovating against redevelopment? And is there a report available?

**Q1b.** Saw Capital Expenditure in the financial report, is there any Operational expenditure reporting as well?

#### **Q1a. Answer: Jono Baker & Stephen Tinsley**

Not at that point of the process yet – too early at the moment

Elders/ Property Team walk around – 50/50 on decision either way (maintain or redevelop)

However, whilst cosmetically looking good the old mudbricks and telegraph poles are likely to contain hidden issues from a structural integrity and risk management point of view. There are some concerns.

Concerned that patching up would result in this process still needing to happen - so decided to do it sooner than later. Long term renovations will cost more money than would be desirable.

#### **Q1b. Answer: Beck Lambert**

As with most Not-for-Profit organisations, the biggest cost is our employee cost of approximately 75%. All costs are detailed in the financial report. Beck offered to have a chat with Rob if he had any questions after reading the financial report.

#### **Q2. Kathi Saric**

Please expand on the limitations and possibilities of the church being in a Green Wedge Zone.

#### **Q2. Answer: Stephen Tinsley & Jody Destry**

The Planning Report indicated there was a lot of potential; aged care, child care, wedding centre, the list was longer than we had anticipated.

Our focus is on listening to people – including from people's prayer walks – the sense the church community has.

How can the church support people who aren't yet here for the future?

Jody said we are talking with council about issues affecting the region in the next 10-20 years – the potential of partnering with them.

**S1. Bill Van Schie**

Bill spoke on how he was excited about the vision of the community hub; ministry through practical outreach into the community, getting people into church, fellowshiping and coming to know Christ – rather than the other way around. Gave an example of a church in America that aligns with this type of 24/7 church model.

**Q3. Peter Opie**

Wondering if there has been any conversation between the property committee & CCVT re finances – or if there needs to be? Is there going to be financing required down the track?

**Q3. Answer: Beck Lambert**

When we had planned to purchase a building for the Op Shop we had reached out to CCVT then. This strengthened ties and gave CCVT an idea of what the church was thinking about for the future. We have a strong relationship with CCVT and CCFS, but we are not quite there yet in terms of talking specifics.

**Q4. Grayson Steer**

If money and planning permit issues weren't an issue – what would the Community Hub look like?

**Q4. Answer: Stephen Tinsley & Jody Destry**

Stephen: we are waiting to hear from the Church Community what they think it should look like. Jody spoke of the journey we are on – and is excited about mining that together to get answers. She encouraged everyone in the room to consider it from that perspective as well – what could they see?

**S2. Ben Juchno**

Ben identified himself as a member of the property committee.

He said everyone is looking for answers – but at the moment there are a lot of questions. Which is why the Property Committee was formed and why the Elders want the church involved in finding the answers. It is very early in the process.

**S3. Peter Baxter**

Once decision has been made to move forward – He and Miriam were always reminded of this scripture in situations like this. Prov 16:9 - “Man may have his plans - but God will direct your path”.

**Q5. Janna Taylor**

What has Council said that they anticipate are the community's needs in the future?

**Q5. Answer: Matt Destry**

Council has a 5-year health and well-being plan. This report gives us a broad sweep of what needs the Council has identified in the area. Council is also waiting for the church to come to them with what we would like to do – so it is a bit of a dance at the moment.

**Q6. Rob Leggett**

Easy to be here for 10 years and still not know people (this is what Rob has experienced personally)

If the vision is for the church to grow bigger – what plans are there for people to connect with each other?

**Q6. Answer: Matt Destry**

Matt apologised to Rob for his experience.

He said there are a number of assumptions in the question.

Small groups will always be an answer for connection – if people aren't in a small group we encourage them to join one.

The congregation may not grow numerically – even if we reach more people in the community.

**Q7. Barry Brookes**

Wondered if the church has noticed any change in tithe offering amounts as collection no longer taken during the service?

**Q7. Answer: Beck Lambert**

A difficult one to answer with the complications of COVID and we are still yet to see the full impact:

- During lockdowns - online giving was embraced, continued fairly much the same. There wasn't a significant different level of giving during that time
- Once back on site we continued to encourage online giving but set up COVID-safe giving stations for people who preferred to give in person.
- It is still hard to tell where giving will land as there has been a lot of turnover in churches in general; congregations changing, numerous new people visiting etc. There is often a lag time until people settle in and start giving.
- A positive start to 2022 – giving is in line with current budget expectations and we have had the best vision offering in a number of years.

**S4. Barry Brookes**

Barry clarified that question was not necessarily re finances but, as he sees giving as an act of worship, he misses the buckets passing by – though he himself gives via transfer – sees it as a significant part of worship. Another form of worship is Communion, which he would love to see more often though understands logistics makes it more difficult.

Barry also said in response to Rob's isolation comment that they didn't join a small group for a number of years when they first came, but once they did, they found it helped them join into the community

**Q8. Eliza Amery**

If we have other suggestions for the property next door is there a place/ avenue to leave those suggestions?

**Q8. Answer: Jody Destry**

The church will be holding conversations with various groups over the next few months – and will be including the Young Adults in the process.

If you have something now, please email in your thoughts via church reception– we already have contributions as a result of the prayer walk.

Jody thanked those who had already submitted their thoughts. We will continue to collect and compile them.

**Q9. Grayson Steer**

**Q9a:** Is it possible to display the planning permit – What is allowed or disallowed under the current zoning?

**Q9b:** How fearful as an Eldership are you that you are fail from an economic and relational perspective?

**Q9c:** What is our current loan amount and what is our borrowing capacity?

**Q9d** What are the constraints of dreaming?

**Q9b: Answer: Stephen Tinsley**

Acknowledged that any process like this is always a stretch – But God is big, the Eldership is not fearful. God will take us where we need to go.

**Q9c&d: Answer: Stephen Tinsley**

Church currently has no loan and has approximately \$950K in the bank at the end of last year.

**S5. Paul Cameron**

Part of this church's DNA is to explore and assess, give lots of money away. Trust God.

It's not about creating a legacy – but living out of our legacy; living in faith and giving.

**S6. Saskia Van Schie**

Speaking as Elder, she appreciated the journey the Eldership took regarding Discovery Community Care's future. She loved the process of taking time to dream and listening to God and to each other, to reach a unity in decision being made. She trusts the current Board will do what God want us to do and it's a privilege being part of it.

**Q10. Stef Juchno**

Affirmed Matt & Jody as God appointed leaders and asked what does Matt and Jody need in the way of prayer and support during this time?

**Q10. Answer: Jody Destry, Matt Destry & Jono Baker**

Jody expressed appreciation for affirmation received. Stated it is a privilege to lead Discovery Church in this season and they are thankful for congregational prayers. Please continue to pray as they lead the team Matt also expressed appreciation for the encouragement, stating that sometimes the encouragement helps clarify new direction as well – it has a prophetic edge to it. They would appreciate continued prayer and encouragement. We are in it together and moving forward together.

Jono believes part of committee's role is to help carry the load and acknowledged that every congregational member has a role to play and carry the load together.

**S7. Eliza Amery:**

Encouraged patience and understanding during this process, with so many people involved it is bound to take time.

**S8. Roedie Rap:**

Shared how God had given Jeanette and himself a big vision 20 years ago and that the church has stood with, encouraged and supported them. They intend to do the same for the church and Matt and Jody now.

**S9. Tony Chandler:**

They have been here since 1993, have seen lots of different things happening and the church leadership coming to the congregation during times of vision casting, as Matt and Jody are doing now.

It's a privilege of being part of journey, assist with the feeling of ownership of direction. The best thing congregational members can do is get involved, pray, seek God. You end up with the church you want to be part of. It's a challenging and exciting process.

**S10. John Arena:**

First sermon they heard at the church was about that the heart of God was here and that the fingerprints of God were discernible. Today we still see DNA of God's heart & the fingerprint of God. Encouraged the leaders to stick at it, they are doing a great job.

**S11. Michelle Arena:**

She's seen miracle after miracle here when people have stepped out in faith. God is incredibly faithful. Excited about the future, would love to share a vision she had a few weeks ago during a service. About being a hub, community minded, being holistic – people coming in being healed and restored in a holistic way.

**Jody** appreciated doing the prayer walks with the church community, especially when walking with people that had been here for years, how exciting it was to hear about the miracles. Realised the need to capture and harvest those stories for the generations to come.

**Q11. Jake Wilson**

How are we doing coming out of the global pandemic? The recently released census information contains interesting statistics regarding religion and church. Interested to know if we growing and how are we doing as a church? Recognising that the intangible nature of church makes this hard to answer.

**Q11: Answer: Matt Destry**

We have approximately 2,000 people on books/data base with just over 1,000 connecting over the weekend on average through the various ministry channels.

This is continuing to increase. There was no drop on online numbers, even when people back on site We are seeing great ministry happening: Youth/Generations – going from strength to strength, children's ministry both on Sundays and during the week and chaplaincy. The Annual report captures the broad sweep. We are having a reboot of different ministries areas – COVID has given us a chance to reassess right across the board. The external markers are very positive – as well as the more intangible parts.

**CONCLUSION OF AGM: Stephen Tinsley & Jody Destry**

Stephen expressed appreciation for the hospitality of the teams that cooked and served our Family Dinner. He affirmed the sense of excitement and thanked all for attending.

***Jody closed the AGM in prayer at 6:55pm.***

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