

**MINUTES of the
Annual General Meeting of the ESRCCB
Sunday, 30th April 2023 at 11.00 a.m.
Bruderklaus Church Parish Centre, Ostring**

Chair: Karin Stauffer, President of the English Community (EC) Council.

Minutes: Benjamin Sakem

Participants: Members of the church Council: Nisha Raju, Peter Awodi, Emmanuel Ibeh, new Council members to be confirmed: Anna Ondicova, Pia Eviota and 27 members of the EC

Fr. Metodej Nemec

Electoral officials: Bobby Raju

Excuses: Head of the Church Rev. Fr. Nicolas Betticher, Council Member Juliana Olatunbosi.

The meeting started at 11.00 a.m. in the presence of Father Metodej, Thomas Fischer - the new coordinator between Bruder Klaus Parish and ESRCCB, President Karin Stauffer, the other members of the EC Council and 27 members of the ESRCCB.

Opening Prayers:

Opening Prayers was led by Father Metodej from Prague, who called on the Lord to guide and lead us during the entire meeting.

Benjamin Sakem and the 1 electoral officer – Bobby Raju were separately unanimously voted to be the writer of the minutes and counter of the election votes respectively.

After the approval of the agenda by the general assembly, President Dr. Karin Stauffer took the floor and presented her welcome speech in which she seized the opportunity to thank the other members of the EC Council for their commitment and sacrifices and expressed a special appreciation to those members whose mandate were finished but could not leave because their replacement could not be found. She also hailed the service of the new Council members Anna Ondicova who is doing a wonderful job with the kids' liturgy as well as that of Pia Eviota who is in charge of the Bible study group. She also officially presented Mr. Thomas Fischer, the new coordinator between Bruder Klaus Parish and the ESRCCB, to the assembly.

The Minutes of the AGM 2022 which were published on the website, were then read, accepted, and approved by 17 of the 18 members of the general assembly with 1 abstention.

Mr. Thomas Fischer, Coordinator between Bruder Klaus Parish and the ESRCCB addressed the AGM:

In his address to the general assembly, the new coordinator, described his competence and experience in building bridges between communities with different cultural and language backgrounds, thanks to a lot of experience gathered from his stay in many different countries around the world. He said, like Jesus who was very active among many different communities and different, believes, we too should follow in his ways, and respect our diversity while maintaining our mutual main belief, the Catholic Church, and that this is what he would like to foster among the members of this EC and other Catholic communities around Bern.

Address to the Community by Fr. Nicolas Betticher, Head of Bruder Klaus

Since Fr. Nicolas could not be with us, his speech was read out by Karin. In his address to the community, he again reiterated the importance of our diversity and promised to continue to support our community as much as he could.

President's Annual Report

The annual report was presented by Karin.

Council Members:

Two Council members resigned in 2022 - Richard Ajebon and Sebastian Eviota. Richard, whose term was to finish at this AGM, wished to resign earlier by the end of 2022 and Sebastian, who after an intensive training period, became a member of the Swiss Guards in Rome.

Nisha Raju the treasurer presented her duties in the council.

Peter Awodi also presented his duties. He helps at the sacristy, and ushers Christians during the mass.

Emmaunuel Ibeh also presented his duties, which includes organizing events alongside brother Richard.

Juliana Olatunbusi who is a very active member could not be present because of her work commitments.

Finally, **Karin** also presented her duties and functions. She informed everyone that she is also the vice president of the pastoral council. She also presented a list of duties of the council, which involved: the liturgical Area, etc.

Two new members to replace the resigned members were presented and appreciated for accepting to commit. These are:

Pia Eviota, responsible for organizing events like the Bible Study.

Anna Ondicova responsible for the Children's Liturgy.

The work planned for 2023:

Anna, called on parents to send suggestions on what to present to the children during their liturgy classes.

She further added that being a mother of two, she understands what the children need, the importance of building friendships with other children and the knowledge of our religion. In collaboration with parents, she promised to do her best to make sure that the children profit from the liturgy.

Others Information:

Karin informed everyone that Father John Paul is expected to return to Switzerland from his hometown, to assume the position of the liaison officer.

Seven different priests celebrated Mass in the year 2022.

2 children were baptized, 6 youth were confirmed and 4 children received their First Holy Communion during 2022.

Children's Liturgy and Pastoral Counselling were the other services that were being offered to the EC.

Donations for 2022 were made to the Villa Maria that is run in Bern by the Oblate Sisters of St. Francis of Sales. They were very appreciative of our donations and prayed that the good Lord replenish the sources of their support.

Karin then thanked everyone that help with the various duties to keep our Community going: the ushers, the alms collection ladies, the advisers to the council, the sacristans, the altar servers who will have six new faces this year, the readers, the choir members, the catechists, the children's liturgy team, the German teachers, the drivers who pick up the otherwise homebound members, the coffee bar team, the website & database admin, the auditor and to the Bruder Klaus Kirchgemeinderat team.

Year 2022 Financial / Auditor's report:

The Financial Report was presented by Nisha, the treasurer of the EC.

The Landeskirche account reported a loss of CHF 7'817.44 while the Community account reported a loss of CHF 552.05.

The budget for 2024 totaling to an amount of CHF 54'379.- was presented by Nisha and unanimously accepted and voted for.

Since the auditor Annette could not be present, Nisha presented the Auditor's Report as well wherein the Auditor confirmed the figures as stated in the financial reports and recommended their approval by the general body. Both of them were then approved unanimously by the general assembly.

Approval of the good job done by the EC Council:

Approval of the work done by the Council was unanimously approved and voted for by the general assembly.

Nisha was commended for her immense work and handed a bouquet of flowers amidst a round of applause from the members.

Discharge of the Community Council:

After appreciation of their jobs with a big round of applause, the existing EC Council was discharged of their liabilities.

Election of new Council Members

Except for the previously mentioned two resignations, the present council members were all elected as a group to be council members for the next two years. Anna and Pia were elected by the general assembly to replace Sebastian and Richard.

Other matters:

- Emmanuel asked if we could invite from time-to-time African priests to come and celebrate with us. Karin said that this depended on the availability of African priests, and if there are such priests, if they are willing to come to Bern.
- A trip to Einsiedeln was proposed as a pilgrimage destination in the future.
- Karin proposed that we visit the Basilica of Annecy in France, where the Saints Fance de Sales und Jeanne de Chantal are buried, for our next pilgrimage.
- When asked if our community is growing, Nisha said it was difficult to say, because many people leave the community without announcing and new members do not immediately register on the website. Brady Eviota offered to sit down with Nisha and go through the list Filipino Members to see who all are not living in Switzerland anymore.

- Karin informed the assembly of the visit of a photographer during the next Sunday Mass to take pictures and asked all who would not like to be photographed to contact her.
- The 2023 church Picnic will be held at the end of Aug 2023 or the first week of September. Details will be made available as the date draws closer.
- Communications concerning our community will be mainly through emails or our website. The Council would like to reduce the use of paper in communication, but if anyone wishes to have information in paper form, they would have to inform the Council of this.

President's Closing Remarks:

In her closing address, the president seized the opportunity to thank the Lord for her strength and good health as well as for the wellbeing of the Priests and all who serve the Church.

The annual general meeting ended at 12.15 p.m. and all participants were invited to an Apéro.

Signed,


Benjamin Sakem

Date: 31-01-24

Place: Bern