Using Zoom for a Parish AGM – A Step by Step Guide

At its meeting on 25 May, the Standing Committee passed the *Parishes (COVID-19 and General Meetings) Ordinance* 2020, which puts into place temporary arrangements for parishes that had not been able to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) because of the impact of COVID19. One such arrangement is to allow an AGM to be held remotely through the use of technology, which is regulated by clause 5 of the ordinance.

Clause 5 makes the following stipulations.

a) The technology used must give all participants in the meeting reasonable opportunity to participate without being physically present in the same place.
b) Parishioners able to participate in this way are deemed "present" for the purpose of the meeting.
c) Parishioners must be given notice in an electronic communication sent at least 2 weeks before the date of the meeting, and the meeting must be announced at each online service of public worship (if any) of the church or parish on at least 2 Sundays before the day of the meeting.
d) any nominations from parishioners must be given to the rector at least 5 days prior to the date of the meeting.
e) a written agenda setting out the items of business and nominees for election at the meeting must be circulated electronically to parishioners 4 days prior the date of the meeting.
f) Voting is to be via a technological means that provides the opportunity to participate in the vote in real time and for votes to the recorded and counted by technological means. Voting cannot be "on the voices" or by a show of hands.

These stipulations are in addition to the standard requirements for an AGM set out in the *Parish Administration Ordinance* 2008, such as the Quorum rule and the need to receive certain declarations from each parishioner who intends to participate in the business of the meeting.

This Guide has been prepared to assist parishes to use Zoom to hold their Parish AGM in compliance with these requirements.

This document explains:

• Using a "Registration Page" to collect declarations from participants
• Using "Polls" for elections
• Using Participants "Yes/No counts" for simple voting
• Other tips and techniques for using Zoom to facilitate an AGM

A number of the features described below can only be accessed by the zoom meeting "host", and must be set up when the host creates the zoom meeting for the AGM.

We recommend that the "host" be dedicated to this task during the AGM, and therefore the host should **not** be the chair or the Minute Secretary. However, the host will need to be in proximity to the chair during the AGM, as some information is only visible on the host's computer, and the chair may need to be able to see this at times.

If you are not the person who will be the "host" for the parish AGM, please give this Guide to the person who will perform this function at the AGM.

1. **Creating the Zoom Meeting with a Registration Page**

To create the Zoom meeting for an AGM, the host **must** login to their account via the web interface to zoom. You **cannot** use the zoom desktop client to create the meeting, as certain features such as registration pages and polls are only accessible from the web interface.

- In your web browser, go to http://zoom.us. If you are not already signed in, click "Sign In" to do so.

- Click "Meeting", then "Schedule a New Meeting"

- Create your meeting, taking note of the comments in red below.

2. Configure your Registration Page

When you have saved the new meeting, you will be able to access the "Registration" options, which are located at the bottom of the meeting page (you may need to scroll down to see this).
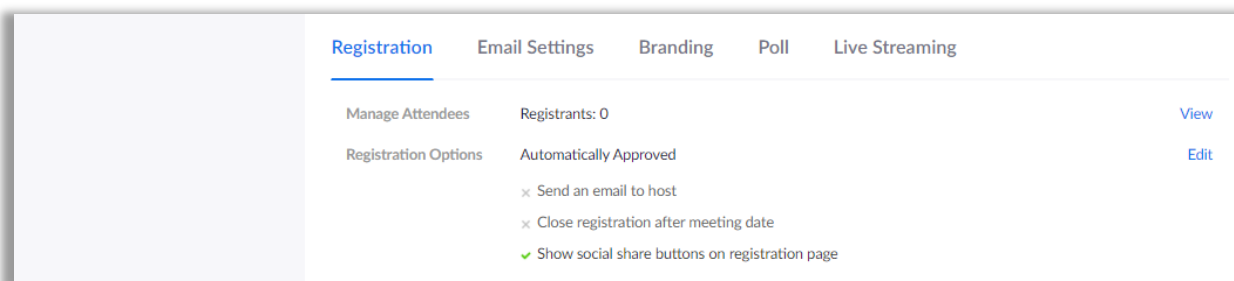
Click "Edit" to change the Registration Options

There are three tabs – Registration, Questions and Custom Questions.

- Complete the "Registration" tab as follows
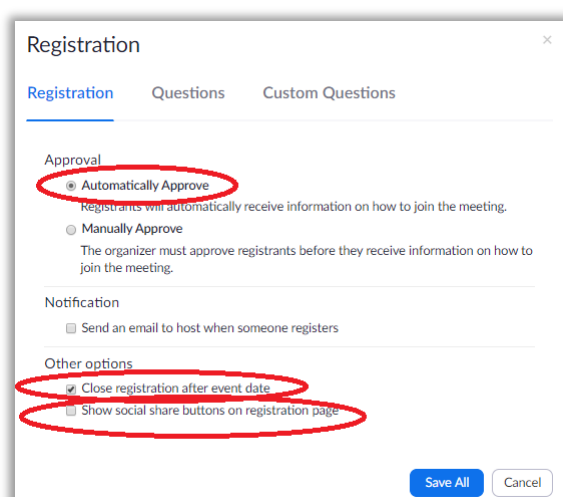
- No changes are required on the "Questions" tab.

- On the "Custom Questions" tab, create three "single answer" – "required" questions as follows.

    Q1. I am a member of the Anglican Church of Australia. I have been baptised. I am not less than 18 years of age.
    Answer options – True and False

    Q2. I have usually during 3 months within the past 12 months attended services of public worship at [name of church]. I do not claim to be a parishioner of any other church or parish of the Anglican Church of Australia.
    Answer options – True and False

    Q3. I have not voted at a general meeting of parishioners of any other church or parish of the Anglican Church of Australia within the past 3 months and I do not intend to vote at a general meeting of parishioners of any other church within the next 3 months.
    Answer options – True and False

This is what the first question should look like (noting that the full text of the question is not visible).

When you have created all three questions, it should look like this.

Click "Save All" to create you new custom registration page.

[Optional Step] To add a church logo to your registration page, go to the "BRANDING" tab.

On the Meetings page, the "meeting link" has been replaced with a "registration link".

This is the link that you will send to the members of your congregation (see next step).

You should click this link now to test it. Create a "dummy" registration, then delete it afterwards.

3. Send Your Invitation Email with the Zoom Registration Link

This is the standard text for a zoom meeting with a registration page.

> Hi there,
>
> You are invited to a Zoom meeting.
> When: Jun 11, 2020 07:00 PM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
>
> Register in advance for this meeting:
> https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvceCopj8pGtZD0KBH-NOT-THE-REAL-LINK
>
> After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

This message assumes that people will "register" some time in advance of the meeting, be sent an email with a link and use that link to join the meeting.

Do **NOT** use the standard invitation, because this will enable people to register for the AGM but not turn up on the day, which will make it more difficult to keep track of who was actually present at the meeting.

Instead, you should send a suitably customised version of the following email to your parishioners.

> Dear Parishioners of XXX Church
>
> Our AGM for 2020 will be held at 7:00pm on Thursday 11 June. Because of the current restrictions, the AGM will be held via Zoom, in accordance with clause 5 of the *Parishes (COVID-19 and General Meetings) Ordinance 2020*.
>
> There are special arrangements so that an AGM can be held via Zoom. Please note carefully the following instructions.
>
> - Any nominations for elections must be send to the rector 5 days prior to the meeting. Unlike a regular AGM, it will not be possible to nominate from the "floor".
>
> - A written agenda setting out the items of business and nominees for election at the meeting will be circulated to parishioners 4 days prior to the meeting.
>
> - You must complete the required declarations before you will be admitted to the Zoom AGM Meeting, via a Zoom registration page. Please complete this form from 6:50pm onwards on Thursday 11 June. Once you have completed the form, a link will be displayed that will allow you to enter the meeting.
>
>   To register and participate in the AGM, please click this link at or after 6:50pm on 11 June https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvceCopj8p-YOUR-LINK-GOES-HERE
>
> - Any person who wishes to participate in the voting of the AGM must have their own PC, tablet or smartphone. If a husband and wife are sharing a device, only one of them will be able to complete the declarations, vote or otherwise participate in the meeting.
>
> I look forward to seeing you at our AGM.
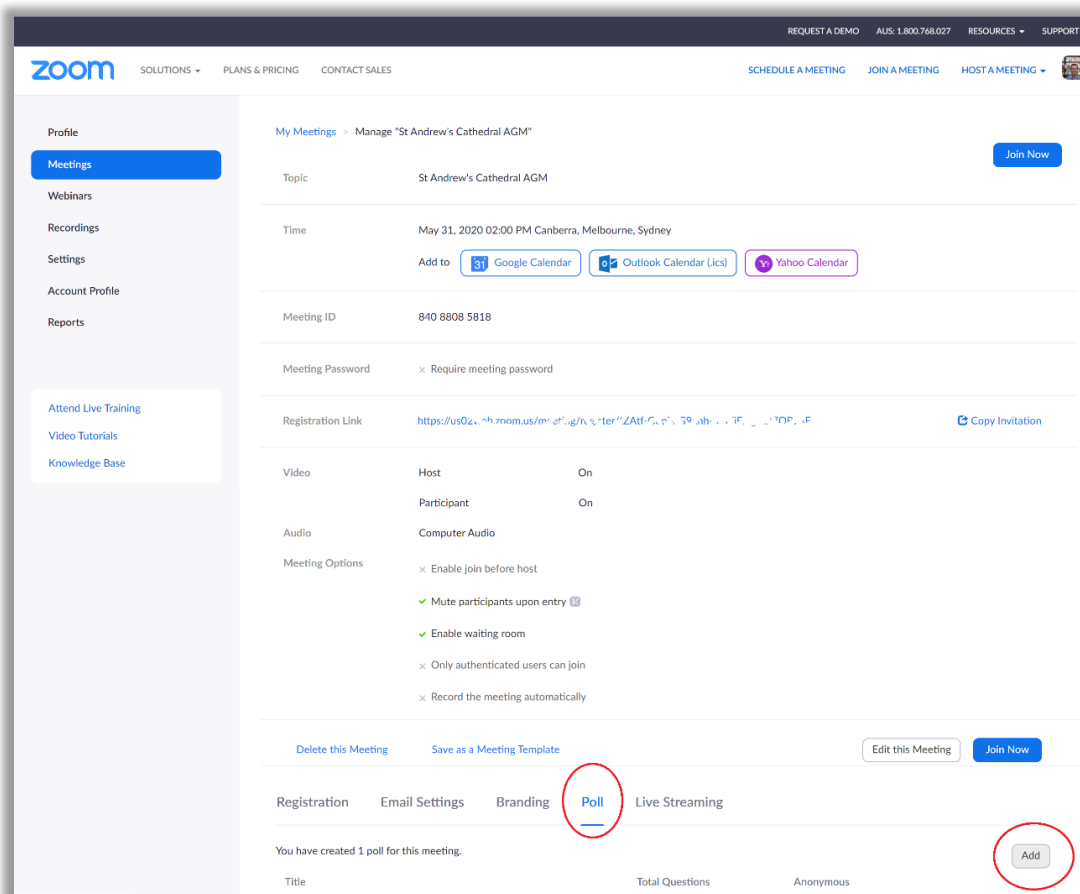
4. Using Zoom for AGM Elections – Using the "Poll" Feature
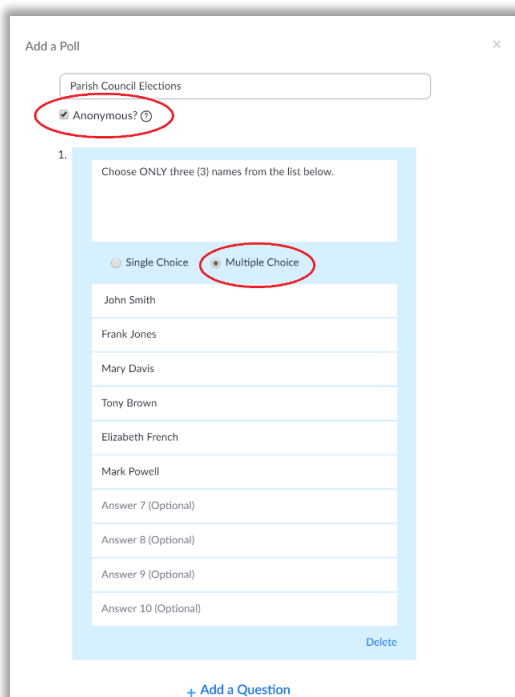
Zoom "Polls" can be used for AGM elections. You must create the polls before the meeting commences. The meeting host can create polls by logging into the Zoom web interface, and navigating to that meeting.

You should create a new "Poll" for each election, using this template as your guide.

This title will display when the poll is running.

You MUST tick anonymous

Give clear guidance on how many candidates can be chosen.

You MUST tick "Multiple Choice"

Do NOT use 'Add a Question' - each election should be its own poll. This will allow you to run a single election and report results,

At the appropriate time during the AGM, the Host will initiates the poll for the election. While the poll is in progress, the host will see the following, which provide a count how many attendees have votes and a progressive tally. This is not visible to the other participants.
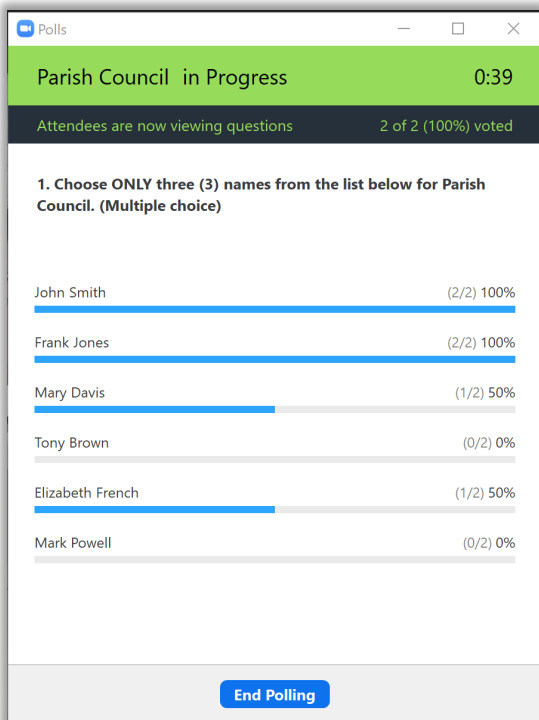
Just before ending the poll, the host must take note of the total number of people who have voted. This will be important for checking the validity of the election result (see below).

Once the host has closed the poll by clicking "End Polling", the results will be displayed. The Host will see the full results (as shown below). The participants will see a similar tally, except that it only shows percentages and not the number of persons voting.
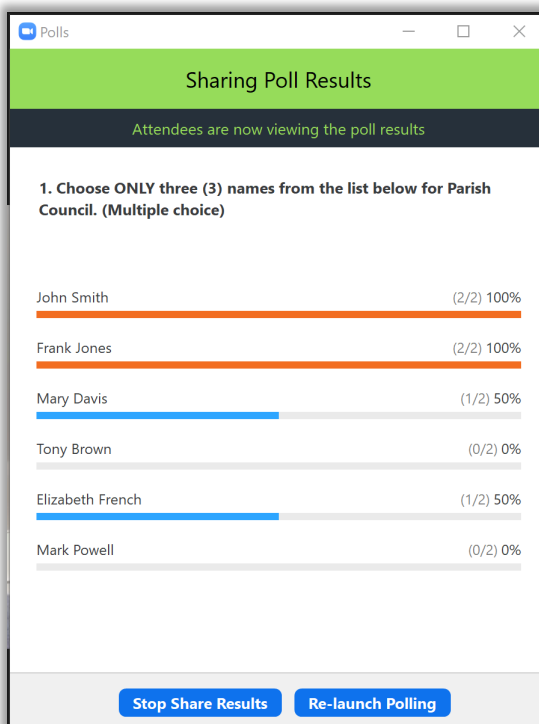
After the Poll is closed, the results will also be available via the Zoom web interface for the meeting.
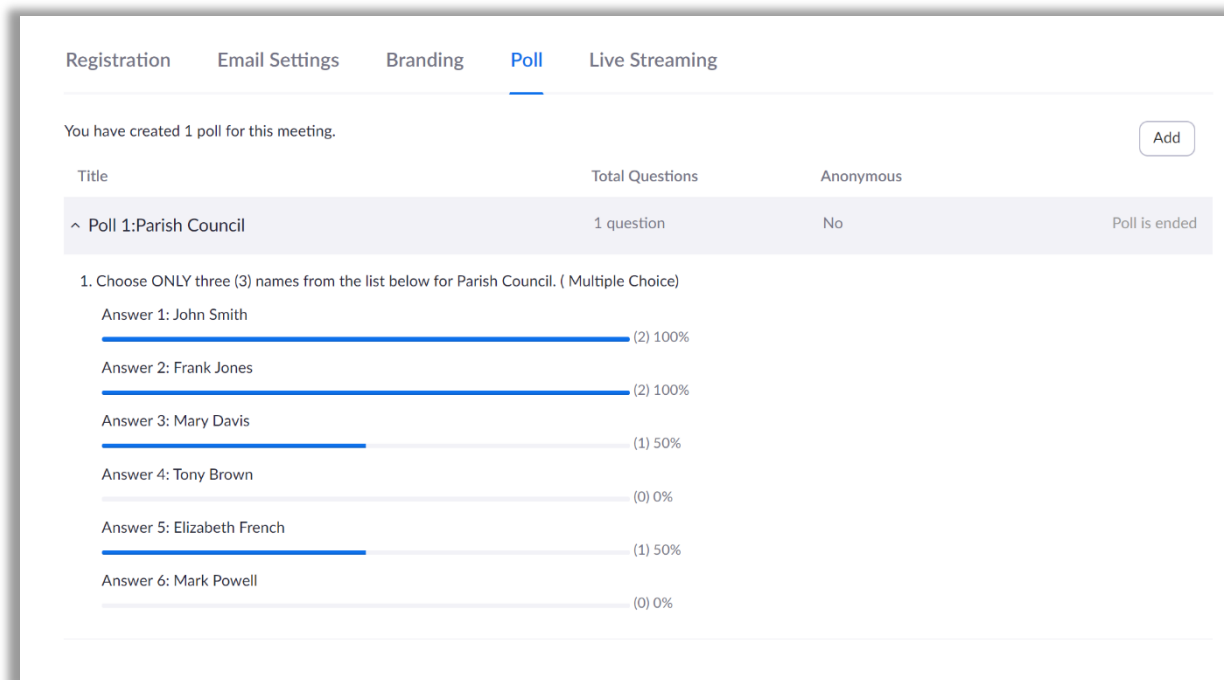
In this vote for three (3) parish councillors, the total number of votes must be less than or equal to 3 times the number of people who voted. In this case: 2 voters x 3 = 6, and there were 6 votes (2+2+1+1) cast in total. This means that the voting in this election is valid.

If the number of votes cast exceeds [voters x 3], it means that someone has voted for more than three candidates. Similar to a paper-based voting system, Zoom does not prevent someone from selecting too many candidates. If someone does this, it is still possible to determine an outcome, but it takes a little bit of additional work to locate the invalid vote(s) and remove them from the result. This is how to do this.

- From the Zoom web interface, go to "Reports" - "Meetings".
- Click "Poll Report" then click Search
- Download the poll report for this meeting. It will be a CSV file. Open this file in Excel (or similar)
- In Column K2, insert the formula

    =LEN(F2)-LEN(SUBSTITUTE(F2,";",""))+1

- Copy this formula for the other rows in column 4. This will add a "count" column for each voter
- Look for any rows which have a count other than 3 (in this example)

- Deduct all the votes cast by the person voting invalidly.

5. **Simple Voting using YES/NO Counts**

While all contested elections will need to done using the "Poll" technique described above, most of the voting at the AGM may be conducted using a much simpler technique.

For typical motions, voting can be conducted using the Yes/No buttons on the participants' panel.

The Chair (or Host) should instruct participants to click on the "Participants" button at the bottom of the screen to display the panel (or press ALT +U on a PC or Command(⌘)+U on a Mac).

The host (or a co-host) should use Screen Share to display the text of the motion to be voted upon. Here is an example.

(This slide comes from the template powerpoint file for a Zoom AGM – see further below).
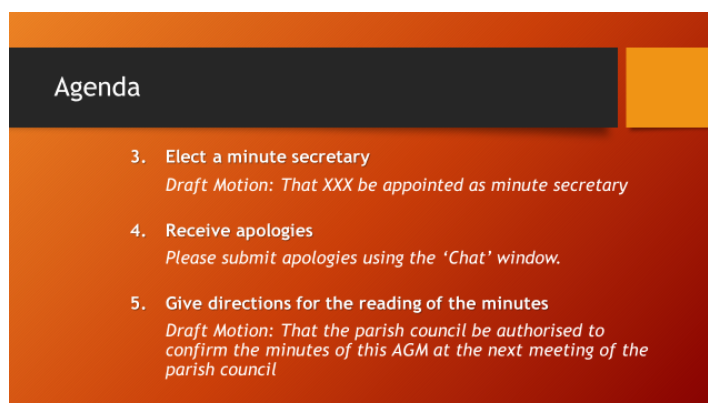
Before commencing the count, the host should click "Clear all" to remove any previous responses.
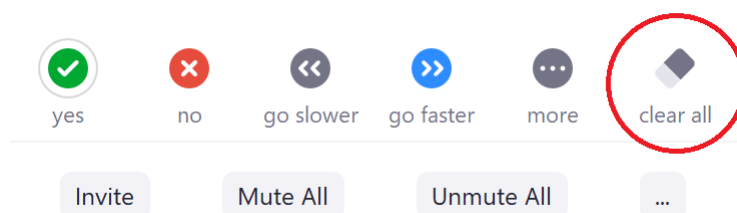
The chair should then direct all participants to select either Yes or No. This method of voting is not anonymous - all participants will be able to see who has voted Yes or No. Note however that only the Host can see the counts (in this example, Yes = 25, No = 3).
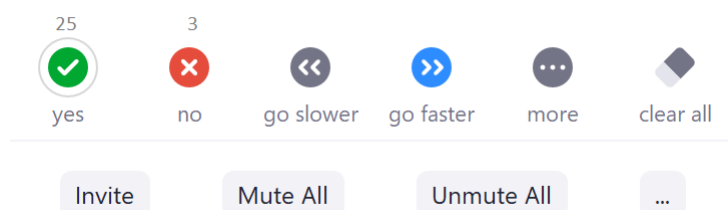
After allowing a reasonable opportunity to respond, the host should relay Yes and No counts to the Chair, who will declare the motion either carried or lost.

6. Other Tips and Techniques for Running a Zoom AGM

- Earlier in the day, the Host should check the "registrants" list for the meeting (via the zoom web interface), to see if anyone has – contrary to instructions – pre-registered for the meeting. If someone has done this, the host should cancel their registration, and send the parishioner an email explaining that they will have to re-register at the designated time (e.g., 6:50pm).

- The host should start the Zoom meeting 15 minutes before the scheduled commencement time (e.g., 6:45pm for our hypothetical meeting).

- Use the "Security" button to **disable** share screen and person-to-person chat. Participants will still be able to chat with the host and co-hosts.
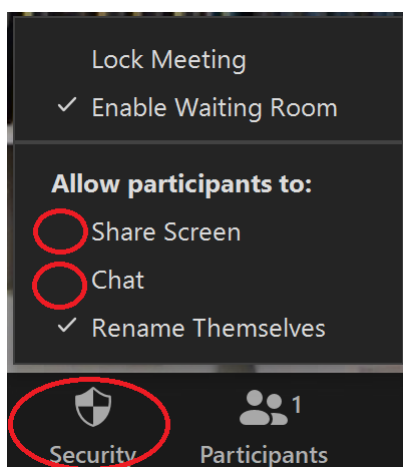
- Nominate the chair and minute secretary as co-hosts. Nominate anyone else who needs to share a screen during the meeting (e.g., wardens, treasurer) as co-hosts. Co-hosts will need to be present in the Zoom meeting for you to do this, so you should ask them to arrive early.

- Create a simple slideshow in Powerpoint (or similar) which cycles automatically through a series of slides, so that people have something to watch while they are waiting for the meeting to start. In Powerpoint, select "Transitions – Advance Slides – After XX Seconds". I suggest 30 seconds. This set of slides should be running on a co-host's computer – NOT the main host. This is because the host needs to be focussed on monitoring the waiting room to admit people.

- During this pre-meeting time, the host (or another designated co-host) needs to be monitoring the waiting room to admit people into the main meeting. The Chair might like to focus on welcoming people as they join the meeting and explaining that participants are leaving microphones on mute.

- Allow 5 minutes beyond the scheduled start time before starting the meeting. This will give time for latecomers to complete the declarations on the registration page.

- The host should have the "Participants" panel visible at all times. This has a count of the number of participants online. When it is nearing the time to start the meeting, the Host should login to the meeting via the zoom web interface, and check that the number of a registrants is equal to the number of participants MINUS 1 (because the host does not count as a registrant).

- The chair should begin the meeting by establishing the Zoom etiquette for the meeting (i.e., remain on mute unless needing to speak, switch to "Speaker View") and explaining how to use the various zoom functions, including YES/NO polling, elections via a poll, and how to use chat to ask a question or indicate a desire to speak.

- The agenda items for the meeting, including the text of all motions, should be on powerpoint slides. A designated co-host should uses the share screen function to display these slides to everyone. A template slide set has been prepared and will accompany this document.

- Use YES/NO counts for simple voting (see section 5 above)

- Use Polls for elections as necessary (see section 4 above)

- The host should use the "Spotlight" feature when the minster or wardens are speaking, to ensure that the focus of the Zoom meeting stays on that speaker.

- After the meeting has concluded, the host should download a copy of the registrants list and print and save this, so that there is a permanent record of the attendees who made the requisite declarations.

Bishop Michael Stead

25 May 2020