

# SOFiA 2024-2025 Annual General Meeting

This Zoom AGM will be held on Saturday 27th September at 2 pm.  
Meeting ID: 897 0077 8323    Passcode: sofia

For those wanting to join by telephone the numbers are:

- 03 659 0603 South Island
- 04 886 0026 Lower North Island
- 09 884 6780 Upper North island

**2pm** Welcome by the Chair, Pete Cowley

Dr David Gwynn's most recent work is on the Council of Nicaea in 325, which composed the original Nicene Creed (still used in modified form in many Christian churches today) and for which 2025 marks the 1700th anniversary. He will speak on the debates surrounding that council and its legacy for modern Christians followed by a short Q & A afterwards.

## **2025 AGM AGENDA**

- Ratification of last years AGM's minutes
- Report from the Chair
- Financial report
- Newsletter report
- Local Groups report
- Membership report
- Website report
- General Business

# **SOFiA 2023-2024 Annual General Meeting**

**Zoom meeting, Saturday 21 September, 2024, 2 pm.**

**Pete Cowley, Chair SOFiA, welcomed members to the meeting.**

**Keynote Speaker:** Dr Cleveland (Clive) Yates, Gisborne local group, speaks on ‘Moving backward into the future’ Many speakers, including John Spong, have pointed out the deficiencies of traditional Christianity. The speaker highlighted the good stuff in what has lasted for 2000 years, and which may provide sustenance for our future – though it will be in a form different from what Jesus laid down. A fuller Report of this address will be published in a future Newsletter. Thanks to Clive for his clear and positive way forward in a ‘re-constituted’ framework.

**Present:** Pete Cowley (Chair/Treasurer/Administration), John Thornley (Secretary), Mary Ellen (local Groups), Laurie Chisholm (Newsletter), Clive Yates, John Warren, Carmen Goldsmith, Jan and Andrew Calvert, Lynne and Bruce Tasker, Michael Templer, Maria Cash.

**Apologies:** Will and Maureen Roxburgh, Yvonne Curtis, Margaret Gwynn, Jocelyn Kirkwood.

## **2024 AGM AGENDA ITEMS**

**Ratification of last year’s AGM’s Minutes** – As the wrong year’s Minutes (2022) had been sent out, the Chair read a copy of the 2023 Minutes. Adopted as a correct record.

**Report from the Chair** This year has been ‘steady as you go’. Special thanks to Laurie and his Newsletter team. Current active membership of 172.

**Financial Report** Net funds as at 30 June 2024 \$13,111.15

**Newsletter Report** - Carmen Goldsmith’s comment in the Minutes of the 2023 AGM felt that our Newsletter needed to have its linkage to the SOFiA movement more clearly highlighted in the Newsletter – possibly in a ‘banner-style’ heading top of page one? The Newsletter continues to be a major flag bearer for the SOFiA.

Laurie was stepping back from Editor role in 2025, though he was still willing to assist with layout and technical work for future issues. The contents for future issues now lay with membership. Members can be encouraged to make contributions including reports of progressive events held locally, as well as seeking out possible articles by other writers. A future Newsletter will highlight this significant change, stressing that the consequent responsibility for a continuing Newsletter was now dependent on members.

**Local Groups Report** Mary Ellen continues to ensure contacts with individual and group members is maintained. Feedback from members confirms that the Newsletter is a key and lively contact point.

**Membership Report** Pete outlined the current situation and being reasonably stable though sinking slowly as people leave or die off and few are joining us. Current members at 30 June were 172 of which 36 are printed and 140 electronic. Four members are receiving the electronic version as well as the printed version.

**Website Report** Pete reported that the website is getting a lot of use over 10,000 unique visitors and 25,000 page hits.

**Reasons for constitutional changes & main areas of change** – Pete read through the key points. Several members found this helpful.

**Draft new constitution** Some lively discussion took place, with some differences aired. It was agreed that the notice for General meetings be increased from 14 to 28 working days given the slowness of the mail system in some areas. 28 working days equates to 6 weeks.

There was also discussion about the number of members required for a quorum. I started with 10 but it could be less. Also a percentage was suggested as perhaps being better for our decreasing numbers. I found out after the meeting that this WAS allowed. 5% is the smallest number (on our current membership that would be 9 people). This was the preferred option although we weren't sure if it could be done. If was the meetings preferred option so 5% it is.

Moved (Chair), Seconded John Warren: That the draft constitution be adopted as the SOFiA Constitution. 12 For , 1 Against. Passed.

Remit of change to Membership Subscription amounts for 2024/2025

### **General Business**

- **Voting on the remit on proposed change to membership subscription rates** It was agreed that the subscriptions for the 2024-2025 year will be set at: Subscribers who receive the electronic newsletter - \$10.00; that subscribers who receive the printed newsletter - \$25.00. Passed.
- **Invitation to new members of the Management Committee.** We meet online on the second Thursday of each month, 7.30 to 8.30 pm. We warmly welcome new members, wishing to share and support our work to promote a progressive theology. Membership of SOFiA Management Committee for 2024-2025 be confirmed: Pete Cowley (Chair, Treasurer, Office administration), John Thornley (Secretary) Mary Ellen Warren (Groups liaison)

The Chair declared the AGM closed at 3.15 pm.

## **Chair's Report for the year ending 30 June 2025**

This year it has been pretty much another "steady as you go". We have not had any serious dramas, thankfully. We did get our new constitution filed and accepted by Charities Services.

### **Newsletter**

Laurie has maintained a high standard magazine which is the key-stone of our organisation.

A special thanks to Editor Laurie Chisholm and his team of helpers for putting the newsletter together every two months. It's a big job but appreciated very much!

### **Website**

The website continued to be accessed by a good number of people far and wide. It offers a wealth of information and resources. Both of these offer important ways in which potential new members may discover us. See the website report for the actual details. What is new this year is A.I. robots scanning our site for content and I don't mind that.

### **Financial**

Our financial situation is good. We have quite a decent amount of money in the bank and our subscription income is more than covering our costs year-to-year. Hence the remit to lower the subscription fees by 50% last year. So we had a very small loss overall this year. I thought it would have been more but it seems Wellington City Council, who used to print our newsletter, have not billed us for several of the, Despite and email asking for invoices no response has been received.

### **Membership**

Over the last year, membership has remained fairly steady – a loss of 10 people overall – this is the lowest attrition rate ever (since I started recording stats) but we are all getting older – just ask my back, hips, feet!

### **Committee**

Your committee has been small (4) but highly effective – we would welcome some new members. John Thornley has been doing an excellent job as Secretary and his willing participation in all areas has proved most useful. Mary Ellen Warren joined us three years ago and took over looking after the Local Groups and keeping in touch with them. Unfortunately most local groups are now defunct.

Pete Cowley

Chair of SOFiA

## Sea Of Faith in Aotearoa - Financial Performance Report

Statement of Revenue and Expenditure YTD for the period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

2023-2024	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Note</u>	2024-2025	2024-2025
Actual		No.	Actual	Budget
190.00	Subscriptions		\$1,105.00	\$800.00
14.24	Interest less Bank Fees		\$13.15	\$13.00
0.00	Sundry income		\$30.00	\$0.00
<b>\$204.24 Total Receipts</b>			<b>\$1,148.15</b>	<b>\$813.00</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
<i>Committee Meeting Costs</i>				
238.96	-Zoom subscription		\$289.21	\$275.00
<i>Newsletter</i>				
880.94	-Photocopying		\$419.13	\$600.00
670.30	-Envelopes/Postage		\$312.75	\$300.00
0.00	-Grants		\$0.00	\$0.00
0.00	-Sundry Expenses		\$0.00	\$0.00
0.00	-Resource Centre		\$0.00	\$0.00
<i>Other</i>				
360.00	-Website		\$330.00	\$360.00
0.00	-Sundry		\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>\$2,150.20 Total Expenditure</b>			<b>\$1,351.09</b>	<b>\$1,535.00</b>
 			<hr/>	
<b>\$1,945.96 Surplus/Deficit</b>			<b>\$202.94</b>	<b>\$722.00</b>

### Statement of Financial Position as at – 30 June 2025

#### Members Funds

Represented by:

#### **Assets**

\$13,111.15	Bank Accounts - KiwiBank	\$12,908.21
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$12,908.21</b>

#### **Less Liabilities**

	Current liabilities	\$0.00
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13.111.15	<b>Net Funds as at Balance Date</b>	<b>\$12,908.21</b>
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## AGM Report from Newsletter Editor

The editor is seeing a welcome increase in contributions. 31 copies of the newsletter are printed and there are 135 subscribers to the emailed version.

The team of proof-readers (Maria Cash, Shirley Dixon, Jocelyn Kirkwood and Yvonne Curtis) have provided an excellent service ever since I became Editor, clarifying unclear content, correcting errors (occasionally major ones).

I now continue as editor but do not create any content. This means that the responsibility for content falls squarely on the management committee and the wider Sofia membership. Looking back, I see that I took over the reins and produced my first newsletter in December 2017. So I'm coming up for the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of becoming editor!

Laurie Chisholm July 2025.

## **Local Groups summary 2024-25**

Local Group activity has been minimal last year.

Gisborne/Tairāwhiti under the leadership of Pete Cowley continue to meet regularly with about 6 to 8 people attending each month.

Hawke's Bay (now officially closed) has forwarded the reserve funds to University of Victoria (re Lloyd Geering Scholarship). Other groups such Central Otago and Palmerston North meet as individuals or are on the lookout for "progressive Sundays". Laurie is meeting with a Christchurch group.

In email responses from local groups' representatives the importance of the newsletter was most frequently mentioned. Thanks to Laurie and his editorial team.

Mary Ellen Warren



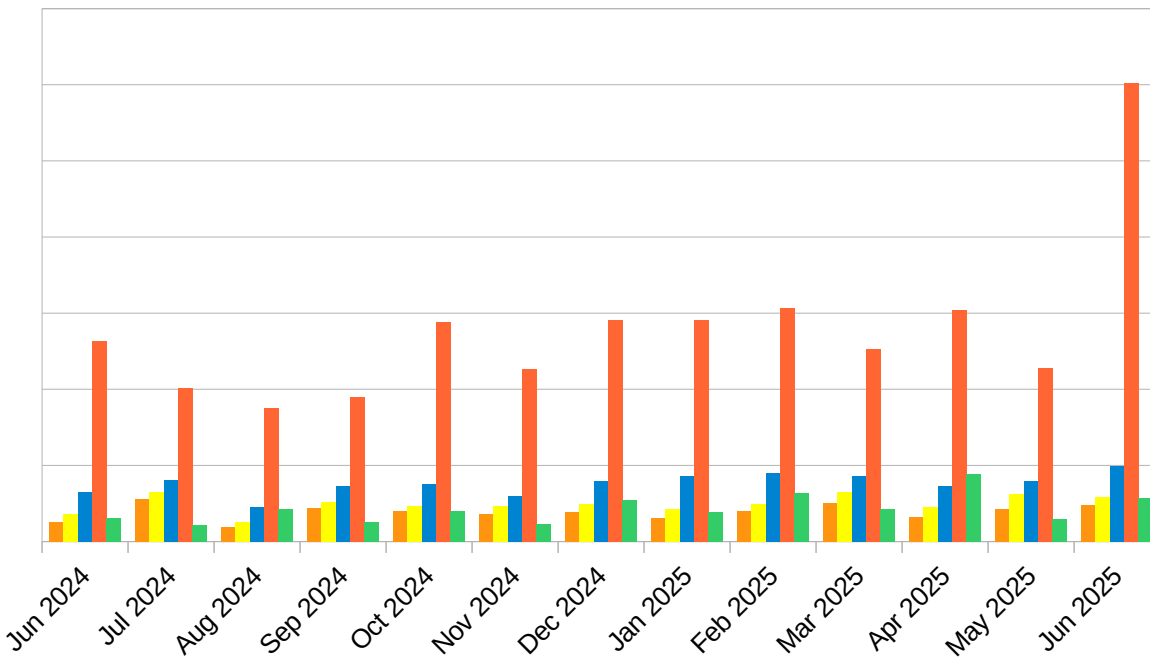
# SOFiA - website statistics to 30 June 2025

The web site has been constantly accessed each month with 2,000 unique visitor each month. See graph below. It is certainly proving to be popular. The very large number of Hits in June 2025 is likely to be inflated by AI robots scanning the website for changes.  
Pete Cowley

## Summary

	Unique Visitors	Number Of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth (MB)
<b>Jun 25</b>	2,368	2,930	4,950	30,087	2,837

## Monthly History



MONTH	Unique Visitors	Number Of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth (MB)
Jun 2024	1,293	1,796	3,234	13,147	1,556.94
Jul 2024	2,773	3,228	4,006	10,065	1,080.28
Aug 2024	939	1,284	2,266	8,776	2,140.69
Sep 2024	2,205	2,579	3,612	9,505	1,270.26
Oct 2024	2,005	2,303	3,765	14,416	1,976.73
Nov 2024	1,830	2,312	3,004	11,306	1,161.02
Dec 2024	1,932	2,466	3,994	14,522	2,740.83
Jan 2025	1,532	2,105	4,289	14,548	1,928.15
Feb 2025	1,978	2,429	4,481	15,344	3,149.61
Mar 2025	2,542	3,238	4,326	12,607	2,136.19
Apr 2025	1,635	2,273	3,646	15,227	4,420.48
May 2025	2,123	3,085	3,994	11,392	1,466.83
Jun 2025	2,368	2,930	4,950	30,087	2,836.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,155</b>	<b>32,028</b>	<b>49,567</b>	<b>180,942</b>	<b>27,865</b>