

**St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy**

**Minutes of the Vestry Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

**It should be noted that due to the lockdown situation this meeting was a 'virtual' meeting via Zoom. The attendees were in agreement that it was acceptable to regard it as a vestry meeting and minute it as such.**

**1. On the Zoom Meeting:**

Rev. Christine Downey  
Denis King  
Lord Morton  
Gavin Craig  
Carole MacBride  
Margaret King  
Jonathan Gibbs  
Wilma Brown

**2. Apologies for Absence:**

Margaret Chill  
Ann Donoghue  
Ella Henderson

**3. Opening Prayer and Welcome**

Christine said a prayer and welcomed the attendees to the meeting.

**4. Minutes of January 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on January 11<sup>th</sup> were approved with no amendments.

**5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**

- Although it was hoped that the new Website would be available on January 31<sup>st</sup> Christine had not had confirmation that it is ready. She will follow up in the coming week to find out the cause of the delay.
- Gavin reported that he had contacted the diocese regarding the protocols around registering St Mary's as a possible venue for a film location. The advice was that registering is not an issue, however if a firm proposal to film at St Mary's were to be received permission would be required. This would initially be considered by the Dean and if they were unsure it would be referred to the Bishop. Gavin has investigated agencies which may be suitable to register with. He has identified one which he thinks would be appropriate and will find out more about how this would work.
- Denis has registered St Mary's on to the Connect Scotland scheme. As part of the registration a request was made for St Mary's to be allocated 2 iPads with wifi (if required) to assist with getting congregation members the ability to be more connected using technology. A reply from Connect Scotland is awaited. Ann is progressing the Digital Champion aspect of this initiative and has been in touch with congregation members that we know may benefit from it.

**6. Other Matters from Christine**

- Christine is intending to introduce a weekly Wednesday midday prayers session.
- She is also looking at the possibility of setting online meetings which could include carrying out some interviews with members of the congregation and also having discussions on matters of the day.
- Although there are 2 weddings still scheduled for April most others have been postponed until the Covid restrictions allow. There is also a baptism of a baby, whose parents were married at St Mary's, which will be scheduled when things ease up.
- There has been good feedback on the Sunday Service which is being streamed via Zoom and Facebook, then uploaded to YouTube. The addition of hymns has been well received.

### **7. Covid-19 Restrictions**

The whole of mainland Scotland remains Level 4 of the Scottish Government Covid-19 restrictions which means that communal worship is not allowed at present. Pippa is working from home and has access to emails. Carole is attending the church at least once a week to check the security and fabric of the buildings. Christine is available by both phone or email should anyone require to contact her.

### **8. Treasurer's Report**

Gavin had distributed his report which showed that the 31<sup>st</sup> January balance in the General Account was £24,461.

There was £3,173 held in restricted funds, leaving £21,288 in unrestricted funds.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £2,779.

The value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on December 31<sup>st</sup> was £45,792. January figure not available at time of meeting.

- A donation of £500 to the Rector's Discretionary Fund was received from a member of the congregation. This donation means that there is now no requirement to draw down money from the unrestricted funds in the General Account, as mentioned last month. The meeting expressed their gratitude for this generous act.
- A payment of £116.50 had been made to Mary's Meals. This money came from the demijohns another couple of other donations to take advantage of the Double The love initiative.
- A £100 hall hire fee had been received from the company who run the Covid training sessions.
- A payment of £248 was made for the purchase of the Wi-Fi booster in the hall mentioned in last month's minutes.

Thank you notes had been received from both the rector and treasurer of St Salvador's in recognition of the £200 that St Mary's had donated to their Food Bank.

The Paypal button has been sent to Christine for adding to the website. It was asked if similar could be done on St Mary's YouTube channel. Christine said that this would be a lot more difficult due to the rules and regulations that YouTube employ.

The possibility of whether it is possible for St Mary's use a QR Code to allow people to make donations will be investigated.

### **9. Fabric Report**

Carole reported that :

- The diocese had replied to her question regarding the scope of the proposed Quinquennial Review saying that it would need to include all of St Mary's buildings. It would have been possible to do a review on the church only but as St Mary's next review is due by September this year that would have meant the church review being carried out twice. Not a financially prudent option.

The question this raised was whether we wished to have the review carried out by the company who has carried out the reviews previously or employ the company that has been suggested to Carole. Carole will find out what each company would charge for this service before a decision is made.

- Work has been carried out on the trees at the rear of the rectory. This work was mentioned last year and was required because they were causing interference with the drainage and consequently the septic tank. The invoice has been received.
- The work on the Rectory Garage roof mentioned in the autumn is now more urgent as the leaks are more pronounced. Ben will source the materials required to carry out the repairs. He will also try to carry out the work himself but may need assistance.
- As the result of a query, the company that installed the Wi-Fi booster in the Douglas Hall had said that it should be possible to install a similar booster in the church. This would allow any use of the internet in the church to run off the broadband in the hall. At present services such as the Christmas ones that were streamed from the church are done via a mobile phone connection, which although it worked is not ideal. The cost of this would be £350, which the company (Lothian Communications) have said they would waive if it did not work successfully. As it was felt that the use of internet access in the church would be more prevalent now and in the future, the meeting gave approval for this to be progressed.
- The rodent problem around the rectory still persists. The rectory itself is currently rodent free. Harry Lawrie, who is dealing with any issues, continues to attend regularly to deal with the problems.

#### **10. Hall Committee Report:**

No events are planned for the hall until Covid restrictions are relaxed enough to allow them to go ahead. As mentioned previously a company is using the hall occasionally to carry out essential Covid and First Aid training. Due to the size and amenities of the hall they find it ideal to run these events in a Covid compliant manner.

#### **11. Lay Rep Report:**

Jonathan had circulated the papers regarding the consultation on changes to Canon 4, which refers to the process for the election of Bishops. At the time of the meeting no one had commented. Jonathan asked that if anyone had any comments to let him know and he would pass on

#### **12 .PVG Report**

Christine re-iterated the point that when contacting congregation members thought should be given as to what form of communication is most suitable. Phoning is not always the best option, as the phone of the person being contacted may not be in a place where it is easy for them to get to. Some people also prefer email due to their circumstances. Caroline Gunn, as PVG co-ordinator will be asked to send out a note on this subject.

#### **13. AOB**

It will not be possible to hold the normal Vestry Away Day this year due to the Covid restrictions. Margaret King asked if it was possible to do something similar via Zoom. It was agreed that this should happen. It is felt, through experience, that Zoom meetings should not last too long or they become less useful. Therefore it was agreed that 2 meetings would be scheduled each lasting 2 hours. These meetings will be held on Saturdays February 20<sup>th</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm. Agendas will be sent out prior to the meeting. Suggestions on subjects to discuss should be sent to Christine.

**14. Date of Next Meeting:** The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on March 1<sup>st</sup>**. At present this will be, again, a 'virtual' meeting.