

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

8th November 2020

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

Gavin Craig

Denis King

Jonathan Gibbs

Carole MacBride

Margaret King

Douglas Walker

2. Apologies for Absence:

Lord Morton

Margaret Chill

Ella Henderson

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

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

4. Minutes of October 5th Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on October 5th were approved with no amendments. It was noted that, although correct at the time, the AGM cannot now be held in the Douglas Hall. These will be displayed in the hall and on the website.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- No work to repair the stonework or slipped tiles on the church had been carried out in October. This is waiting on the contractor's availability. There are no signs that this is affecting the interior of the church.
- After some adjustments the heating in the Douglas Hall is working more efficiently now. Gavin will check when the system was last serviced.
- Christine informed the meeting that the work on the new Website was now more or less complete. She showed the meeting what it will look like. Before going public Christine wants to carry out a check on the content to make sure that there are no obvious errors.
- Christine has also almost completed a brochure which describes St Mary's. This was also shown to the meeting for comment.
- The Time and Talents appeal document mentioned in previous minutes was presented to the meeting and approved. It will now be sent out to the congregation via email and also published in In Touch.

6. Other Matters from Christine

- Christine gave an apology for not having contacted Margaret Chill prior to the meeting to get Margaret's input
- The rectory property is looking good.
- The sound for the Zoom and Facebook Sunday Services continues to improve as do the numbers that view them.
- It is good to be able to see people face to face on a Sunday
- Concern has been raised regarding the church standing empty and how this could affect the fabric and the organ. The building itself is checked at least every two weeks to ensure that no problems are evident. There have also been funerals and weddings held in the church. Therefore although not used on a Sunday there is intermittent use which will require heating and lighting to be seen to be working. A maintenance review (not tuning) on the organ was carried out at the beginning of November and a report is awaited. Alan Phillips has been playing the organ at weddings and funerals with no issues but the report will highlight internal problems, if any were found.
- There is a feeling within some of congregation that we need to try and get 'back to normal'. This is being kept under review but given the numbers that can be accommodated in the church under the regulations there is not an easy solution. Christmas will be looked at closely to see what may be possible. Were it be the intention to use the church then there would have to be a limit on numbers. Should anyone have ideas on how we can make Christmas as 'normal' as possible please make them known to Christine or a vestry member.

7. AGM

It was hoped that the AGM could be held in the Douglas Hall on November 22nd. The current restrictions from both the Scottish Government and from the SEC Province make it clear that this is not allowed. Rather than defer the AGM until a later date it was agreed that it would proceed using Zoom.

The AGM papers were nearly complete and were scheduled to be distributed by email on November 11th. Paper copies will be sent to those congregation members who do not use email and there is an awareness that the member would wish a copy.

The congregation will be encouraged to send in any comments and queries on the papers before the meeting. These can go either directly to Christine or the relevant person who can assist with answer. This should make the process run better on the day.

Any voting will be done via a wave of hands. Denis will monitor this.

Douglas Walker's 3 year term on vestry has been completed. Thanks were given to Douglas for his input to meetings and for his dedication to carrying out role.

There are 3 elected positions that need to be filled. These are 1 Ordinary vestry member, Lay Representative, and Alternate Lay Representative. Nominations are being sought for these positions.

There is also the position of Rector's Warden that needs to be filled. This is a role appointed by Christine. At present Christine does not have a volunteer to take on this role. Should anyone be interested in becoming Rector's Warden please contact Christine.

8. Treasurer's Report

Gavin distributed his report which showed that the 30th October balance in the General Account was £28,452.

There was £2,973 held in restricted funds, leaving £25,479 in unrestricted funds.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £1,922.

The value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on October 31st was £41,808. This was calculated on the 1594 units that St Mary's now holds after the sale of units mentioned below multiplied by the unit price of £26.2284 on October 31st

- The money from the approved sale of £10,000 worth of units from the Unit Trust Pool was received during October.
- The Provincial Grant Fund reimbursed £8,480 towards the work being carried out on the rectory.
- Half yearly HMRC Gift Aid return of £4,278 was received.
- A further £500 was received from the congregation as a result of the September appeal. £200 was also donated by the Fairtrade Group.

The possibility of a card machine which could be used by congregation, visitors and wedding guests to make donations has been explored. The Sumup card machine, seems the cheapest option for this purpose. The charge is 8p for per £5 of donation. It was agreed to progress this

Being able to make donations via Paypal is another option being progressed.

It was agreed that a £100 voucher would be purchased and given to Graeme MacBride as a thank you for the excellent grass cutting work he carries out during the year.

9. Fabric Report

Carole reported that :

- An Energy Survey had been carried out on the church. The report from this had been circulated to vestry. This was done with the purpose of having an independent view of what possible improvements could be made to make St Mary's more energy efficient and be able to reduce carbon emissions. Having this report would be useful if grants were sought to assist St Mary's to achieve this aim..
- Carole had also subscribed to the Scottish Church Trust on the basis that various grants are available through this trust.
- There were two aspects of work that Carole had been specifically looking at. These were Secondary glazing of the windows and internal insulation of the ceiling in the chancel area. From researching the internal insulation possibility Carole had reached the conclusion that it was something not likely to be progressed unless it was part of a re-roofing project. The Secondary glazing idea would entail the installation of a very narrow internal framework held in place by magnets. On to this framework a product called Invisitherm is applied. The resultant secondary glazing is almost invisible and would not detract from the original appearance of the stained glass windows. Carole is in discussions with a company who carry out this type of work. Given St Mary's current financial position it was agreed that an

estimate of how much this would cost was necessary before further consideration could be made.

- There is the requirement for a number of pieces of work to be carried out on the trees and bushes in the rectory grounds. The meeting agreed that this work be deferred at the present time and looked at again next year.
- The roof of the wooden garage next to the Douglas Hall is in need of repair. Pippa's father, John Manning, has kindly agreed to carry this work out. The cost of materials will be just under £350. It was agreed that this should be progressed. A donation will be made to a charity of John's choice as a thank you for doing this
- Likewise the garage roof at the rectory is also in need of repair. Ben is willing to carry out the work but given the structure of the roof will need a volunteer to assist him. The work would probably be carried out in January. It was agreed that this would go ahead and that St Mary's would meet the costs of the materials.
- Carole pointed out that the sound equipment which has been purchased to allow St Mary's services to be available via the internet had been financed by Ben and Christine. This had totalled around £2,500 so far. She felt that this money should be recompensed. Ben and Christine were adamant that they did not wish this to happen and that it was their gift to St Mary's. The meeting expressed their gratitude for this.

10. Hall Committee Report:

The Douglas Hall has not yet been opened to outside groups. Pippa is still being contacted by groups asking when this will be possible again. It was agreed that under the present guidelines of both the Scottish Government and the Province that we should not consider allowing outside groups to use the hall until matters improve.

11. Lay Rep Report:

Nothing to report.

12. PVG Report

Nothing to report.

13. AOB

- Gavin suggested that as it will not be possible to hold a Christmas Fayre this year it would be a good idea to ask the congregation to donate homemade crafts, knitting, and baking which could be ordered and delivered to the church to collect. It was agreed that this was a good idea. Gavin will send out a communication to ask for donations.
- Margaret King said that she had been reading the 'employing youth and children's workers' book recommended by Claire Benton-Evans at the October vestry meeting. This had given her a strong feeling for the enormity of the project that was being tackled and that it was something that would need a lot of research before moving forward.

14. Date of Next Meeting: The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on December 7th** At present this will be, again, a 'virtual' meeting.