

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

7th September 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

Ella Henderson

Margaret King

Douglas Walker

2. Apologies for Absence:

Lord Morton

Margaret Chill

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

Christine read a reflection written by Oscar Romero and welcomed people to the meeting.

4. Minutes of August 3rd Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on August 3rd were approved with no amendments. These will be displayed in the hall and on the website.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

The person that Christine has asked to create the new Website continues to work on it. She had been further delayed through a family bereavement. It is hoped that the site will be available soon.

The magazine list has now been reviewed for accuracy and updated accordingly. Two new volunteers agreed to join the distribution list. It was agreed that, as the Covid-19 situation is still volatile, the September issue would be distributed via email. This will be reviewed again prior to the November issue being published.

The current position of the Fair Trade group was raised. This was in regard to stock and also volunteers to staff the stall. Carole agreed to contact Steve Haigh to get his input on this. This was done immediately after the meeting. Therefore the reply is being included in these minutes. Steve informed that he had taken all the stock home at the beginning of the lockdown. So far he has bought any stock that was going out of date and made use of it himself. He estimates that there is around £80 of stock still left. As the numbers in the group have been dwindling he is going to contact group members to see if it is feasible for it to continue. He is keen that it does, so more volunteers may be necessary.

Christine said that she had received a lot of good input for the appeals documents which were discussed at the last meeting. She is collating the information with a view to producing three

documents. These will cover a Funds Appeal, Talents and Time Appeal, and a St Mary's pamphlet for distribution to the new housing. She said that she would welcome any assistance offered in producing these documents.

6. Other Matters from Christine

- Christine has been in touch with Claire Benton-Evans regarding how St Mary's can work with young people. A Zoom meeting will be arranged with Claire to discuss ideas. This meeting will include people from within the congregation who have expressed an interest in this subject.
- The Blessing of Animals Service will take place on October 4th.
- In reply to a question on whether St Mary's had a set fee for funeral services the answer was in the negative. However Christine said that there was an expectation that a donation would be given. This is something that she will address when discussing funeral arrangements with families.
- Pippa will be asked to create a list of fees for the various types of extra services in order that it can be used as a guideline when these occur. There will always be discretion allowed to waive or amend these fees where circumstances are appropriate.
- Christine has 3 weeks annual leave still to take. She is currently intending to do this from October 6th to October 25th.

7. Treasurer's Report

Gavin distributed his report which showed that the 31st August balance in the General Account was £29,732.

There was £2,523 held in restricted funds, leaving £27,208 in unrestricted funds.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £1,323.

The value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on July 31st was £48,838. The August end figure was unavailable at this time.

A payment of £3,500 has been made to the Stonemason who is working on the Rectory. This was made up of £440 from the St Mary's Trust Account and £3,060 from the General Account. The Provincial Grant Fund had reimbursed £1,750 (50%) in line with their commitment to this work. This money went into the General Account.

The Legionella Risk Assessment has been carried out on the Rectory Cottage. Charge £54.

Judy Whiteman had agreed, subject to vestry approval, to carry out the Independent Examination of St Mary's accounts this year. This approval was unanimously given.

Gavin gave details of all the Charitable Donations that St Mary's had made in the current financial year. This came to £1,400 directly from church funds. The meeting discussed a number of charities and suggestions that had been put forward. No decisions were made on the night a further meeting will be arranged prior to the end of September to give time for a more in depth discussion and a final decision to be made. This will allow for the agreed payments to be made within the financial year.

8. Fabric Report

Carole reported that :

- As mentioned at the previous meeting it became necessary to replace the rectory central heating boiler. This has now been done.
- The external stonemasonry work and the roofing and guttering work on the rectory and adjoining cottage are all progressing well. There was a requirement to purchase some new cast iron gutters due to the rusted condition of some of the gutters that were removed. This will add £850 to the cost of the project. The salvaged cast iron gutters are able to cover the rest of the buildings so the previous plastic gutters are no longer required. It was only after the gutters were removed that the extent of the decay became obvious.
- Carole had received a verbal quotation regarding the church heating for the installation of air source heat pumps and air to air appliances. This was in the region of £23k. She therefore ruled that out of consideration. Her latest research is into the use of infrared heating panels. She is currently unable to give much more information about those but the actual appliances look impressive, maintenance is not necessary unlike boiler systems. They have been used in stone built properties successfully by the National Trust. She has asked a contractor based in Rosyth to provide an estimate of the likely cost, having provided them with the necessary details of the size of the church building and has asked for details of churches which have had this type of heating installed previously. This is, as far as she can see, the last remaining hope for something that is efficient, effective and aesthetically pleasing.

9. Hall Committee Report:

Nothing to report.

10. Lay Rep Report:

Nothing to report.

11.PVG Report

Nothing to report.

12. AOB

As restrictions for Covid-19 are being relaxed the meeting discussed the possibility of starting to hire out the Douglas Hall to outside groups again. This would be done strictly within the Scottish Government rules for what activities are allowed. It would also need approval from Bishop John as we would be changing some of the measures which he previously approved to allow St Mary's to hold Communal Worship in the Douglas Hall. This approval will be sought.

Pippa has been creating a document which will be given to any group that wish to hire the hall. This document will give clear guidance on the terms and conditions under which they are allowed to use the hall and the procedures for carrying out the necessary sanitising of the area after use.

There was then a discussion on what St Mary's charges for hall hire. This is currently £10 per hour which was felt to be well under what other venues charge. The meeting agreed that when the hall is available to hire again that existing users would still be charged at the £10 an hour rate but be warned that it is likely this will increase to £15 per hour in the future. New users would be charged at £15 per hour. Most of the groups that use the hall are quite small in number so there was a concern that raising the charges by too much might mean that they would not be able to be financially viable for them. This will be kept under review.

13. Date of Next Meeting: The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on October 5th**. At present this will be, again, a 'virtual' meeting.