

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

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

**It should be noted that due to the current situation this meeting was a hybrid meeting with some attendees being on Zoom and others in the Douglas Hall**  
**The attendees were in agreement that it was acceptable to regard it as a vestry meeting and minute it as such.**

**1. Attendees:**

Rev. Christine Downey  
Lord Morton  
Carole MacBride  
Margaret Chill  
Gavin Craig  
Ella Henderson  
Denis King  
Pippa Crichton  
Ann Donoghue (Zoom)  
Margaret King (Zoom)

**2. Apologies for Absence:**

Wilma Brown

**3. Opening Prayer and Welcome**

Christine said a prayer and welcomed the attendees to the meeting. She specially welcomed Pippa, who was attending to observe with a view to taking on the Secretary duties after the AGM.

#### **4. Minutes of October 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

There was one amendment to the minutes of the meeting held on October 4<sup>th</sup>. This was under of Treasurer's Report section. The following had been missed when the minutes were written :

Since St Mary's started investing in the UTP all dividends have been automatically reinvested to buy more units. The meeting agreed to change this approach and to receive the dividend as cash into the General Account.

This has now been added to the October minutes.

The minutes, with amendment, were approved by the meeting and will now be filed and displayed as normal.

#### **5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**

- Gavin reported that there was no real progress regarding the subject of registering St Mary's with an agent as a possible film location. He had contacted another company, but did not feel they were suitable.
- Through an initiative set up by Ann, students from Oatridge College had come on-site to carry out some maintenance work in the church grounds. This was mainly in the area around the trees at far end of the car parking area. They will return in the spring to do further work. There is also a plan for the students to build some benches to place in the grounds.
- As no one, other than pupils and staff, are currently allowed inside schools it has not been possible to discuss the logistics of running the Choir Festival with the head teachers. It has therefore been decided to postpone this event until May. The intention is to send out an email to the schools to inform them of this and to try and arrange a virtual meeting in January to discuss what is possible.
- Pippa continues to keep a track of her hours to determine the extra hours that may be required for her to be in the office.
- As the company who held the rectory boiler contract no longer provide that service, a new provider is needed. The company that provides the cover for the estate, Aquarius, will be contacted with a view to taking this on.
- There are still some problems with streaming services from the church. This is due to issues with the Wifi signal. A solution is being progressed.

## **6. Other Matters from Christine**

- The annual St Mary's Trust meeting had been held on October 26<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting the subject of the Canon 35 for the church heating, which had been rejected, was raised. Dean Frances Burberry took an action to talk to the Diocesan Buildings Committee about the reasons for this. Dean Frances had just sent Christine an email which indicated that the Canon 35 may now be approved. This was because it is now recognised that the proposed system was the only viable solution in both appearance and cost.
- Discussions are taking place with a view to creating a 'more balanced' relationship with the Dalmahoy Hotel. The manager has asked about the feasibility of bringing his customers to the church for the Christmas Eve service. St Mary's is more than happy for this to happen.
- Some comments had been received regarding the volume of the organ music during the introduction and conclusion of the Gospel. This is affecting people with hearing aids, as the music is being amplified through the lectern microphone. Christine will speak with Alan to ask him to modify the level of sound.

## **7. AGM**

- St Mary's AGM will be held on Sunday November 21<sup>st</sup> in the Douglas Hall, after the morning service. There will be the option for people to join the meeting via Zoom.
- The AGM papers will be sent out on Wednesday November 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Nominees for the Alternate Lay Representative and 3 Ordinary Vestry Member roles are still being sought.

With reference to St Mary's outreach aspirations there was a suggestion that there could be a Youth Representative who could be invited to attend vestry for some meetings. Similarly, someone from the hotel could be invited to meetings to discuss partnership possibilities. These thoughts will be considered further.

## **8. Community Engagement Team (CET)**

- The Questionnaire/Survey is scheduled to be distributed on November 13<sup>th</sup> with replies to be in by November 27<sup>th</sup>. The analysis of replies is aimed to be completed before Christmas. This will give St Mary's a view of the things to focus on in 2022.
- It was not possible to arrange a Christmas Fayre this year. However, it is planned to run one on the first Saturday in December 2022. This will give plenty time to contact people and groups that may wish to have a stall at the event.
- Christine has created a draft leaflet for the Friends of St Mary's initiative. The team will give feedback on it before including it as part of the exercise.
- The CET plan to use the congregational list to identify people who would benefit from a one to one conversation, via phone, on what is happening at St Mary's

## **9. Treasurer's Report**

Gavin had distributed his report which showed that the 31<sup>st</sup> October balance in the General Account was £17,879. (£14,342 previous month)

There was £3,779 held in restricted funds or for other specific purposes, leaving £14,100 in unrestricted funds. (£10,613 previous month).

- A £250 donation (including Gift Aid) had been made to the Fabric Fund.
- The half yearly HMRC Gift Aid return of £3,788 had been received during the month.
- As authorised by vestry at the October meeting, £400 had been sent to the Education to the Children charity.
- The retiring collection on Sea Sunday totalled £471.50 (Gift Aid included). As previously agreed, this was rounded up to £500 and sent to the charity.
- A thank you was received from St Salvador's Food Bank for the donation that was sent to them. This money was raised at the Harvest Service.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £2,659 (previous month £2,659).

The value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on September 30<sup>th</sup> was £50,173 (August end value £51,447). October end figure not available at time of meeting. The September figure includes the 15 units received from the half yearly disbursement. As documented in the October minutes, disbursements from

the UTP will be received as a deposit into the General Account in future. It should be noted that the UTP management committee have now stopped the practice of re-investing dividends in more units. Therefore, St Mary's will be in line with all other investors.

As agreed at the October meeting a sale of £9,000 from the UTP has been instructed. The money from this should be in the General Account by mid-November.

### **10. Fabric Report**

Carole reported that :

#### **THE HEATING PROJECT.**

As mentioned earlier in the minutes, the Canon 35 for this project was rejected. This was initially because more information (which Carole had previously sent) was required. As a result, two members of the Buildings Committee were invited to St Mary's to view what was being proposed. One of them thought that the proposed units would harm the aesthetic look of the building. This has been referred back to the committee with backing from Dean Frances.

A heating specialist recommended by the Buildings Committee is coming to St Mary's to give input on the subject. There will be a fee for this, but the Buildings Committee will refund the money.

#### **THE SECONDARY GLAZING PROJECT**

The Canon 35 was approved by the Buildings Committee. Carole is now filling in the required form to request a grant from the FCC Scottish Action Fund. She will require some information from Gavin and Denis to help complete this form. The outcome of the grant request, which will not be known until March, will determine how this project proceeds.

#### **QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW**

Remedial work was carried out on the church roof to ensure that the church is watertight.

A roofing specialist is being commissioned to look at the roof and report on what requires to be addressed and to provide a range of solutions. This will, again, require a fee to be paid. The fee will be refundable from the Buildings Committee.

**11. Hall Committee Report:**

Nothing to report

**12. Lay Rep Report:**

Christine and Ann represented St Mary's at the virtual Diocesan Synod in October. As the technology was not working very well, they found it a frustrating experience. Ann has written a full account of proceedings which can be viewed in the Lay Rep's AGM report.

**13 .PVG Report**

Nothing to report.

**14. AOB**

Concerns had been expressed about the difficulty that some people have going up and down the chancel steps to read or speak from the lectern. As there is no obvious way to address this from a fabric perspective, it was agreed that the server would move to the top of the steps and be available to give assistance each time someone was required to come to the lectern.

Margaret King asked if it was possible to use two of the shelves in the sacristy to store the mugs and other items required to provide after service coffee in the church. This would be used when it was not possible to use the Douglas Hall. The request was approved.

As this was the last vestry meeting before the AGM, Christine gave her thanks to the members who had come to the end of their elected term. This was Carole, Margaret Chill, Ella, and Denis. She thanked them all for their hard work and dedication through a difficult period.

**Date of Next Meeting:** The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on Monday December 6<sup>th</sup>**. At present this will be, again, a face to face meeting which will also allow for people to attend via Zoom.