

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting 5th September 2022

1. Attendees:

Lord Morton
Rev. Christine Downey
Pippa Crichton
Wilma Brown
Ann Donoghue
Margaret King
John O'Connor
Steven Haigh

2. Apologies for Absence:

Gavin Craig

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

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

4. Minutes of June 6th Meeting

There was one noticed error where December had been input instead of June. This has been amended. There were no further omissions or amendments to the minutes from the June meeting. The minutes were thereafter approved by the meeting and will now be filed and displayed as normal.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- Cleaner for hall: Following the last meeting Carole and Margaret have been in discussions with someone who is willing to take on the cleaning of the hall. The next step is to set up the pay as you earn scheme through the Diocese. This will require all the individuals details to be obtained and forwarded to Gavin. Margaret will progress this.
- Notice board for Mar Thoma: The measurements have been handed over to John, but due to circumstances the board has not been made yet but is in hand.
- Collection plate: Steven mentioned that at a recent Baptism a comment was made regarding the lack of a collection. Christine stated that this was an oversight and due to Covid restrictions the practice had stop. It is

planned however to reinstate the collection as soon as possible. The plate will now be able to be passed round once more which will be the responsibility of the stewards.

It is also felt that we need to make donation signs more prominent, to encourage people to donate.

6. Other Matters from Christine

- Christine's final week of annual leave will be taken from the 31st Oct till 12th Nov. However, part of this time she will be attending a Clergy Conference. Christine is also planning to be present for All Souls.
- AGM Preparation: The AGM is not far away and Christine would like those that need to produce reports to start them sooner rather than later so we can be as organised as possible. The AGM will be on Sunday 20th November.
- Papa New Guinea Letter: We recently received a letter from Papa New Guinea to whom St Mary's have been making donations to for the last 11 years. The letter thanked us for our contribution stating that we have successfully put 3 priest through seminary school. They went on to state that the training period for a priest had now been reduced from 4 years to 3. As such we would have £500 donation outstanding. They asked what we wished to do with this money. The following options were suggested by them. 1. We could stop supporting them as we have done and put it towards something else or 2. We continue as we have been and agree to put it towards training another Priest, this would leave an outstanding amount of £1000 (£500 / year of training), committing us for a further 3 years.

Vestry discussed these options. Due to the continuing rise of living costs and the uncertainty of St Mary's finances, Vestry were reluctant to commit to a further 3 years. It was said that they also need donations towards building developments, such as clinics, which do not only benefit the priests, but the nurses who treat people in need for miles around. This was felt to be a good option, as Vestry wished to continue the relationship and were also happy to support a new development. We can revisit supporting another priest in the future.

All vestry were in agreement that the outstanding £500 will be donated to the development of the new buildings.

- Liturgical Changes: As everyone is aware it has been agreed by the House of Bishops and Synod that Christine's Stipend be increased by 10%, the first significant increase since 2006. This is to bring Scottish Episcopal

Clergy into line with their English Counterparts. This will come into effect from September. If there are any concerns regarding this people can express them to Christine and she can pass them onto the Bishop, or members of Vestry could contact the Bishop themselves. Vestry felt that although the churches finances would be stretched further, the stipend along with heating should be a priority. It is only fair that Clergy get a fair “wage”.

- Treasurer: Vestry is in need of a new treasurer. Christine has some lines of enquiry to pursue regarding possible candidates. The option is there that this role could be done remotely. Denis has offered to be there to support whoever agrees to take on the role.

7. Treasurer Report

Gavin distributed his report which showed that the 31st August 2022 balance in the General Account was £48,300.67 (£ 50,239.52 previous month)

There was £35,969 held in restricted funds or for other specific purposes, leaving £12,331.67 in unrestricted funds.(£46,509.52 previous month).

- £291 was raised and donated to the PDSA by cheque.
- Vestry agreed to move the £33,000 from Blackie’s estate to the Legacy Fund.
- A payment of £450.91 was received from the SEC Unit Trust.
- Christine will be attending the Clergy Conference costing £245.
- £631.50 was paid to Lothian Communications for Wi-Fi to the Church from the Fabric Fund.
- £312 was paid from St Mary’s Trust for drainage work.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £1,265.14 (previous month £939.14).

8. Community Engagement Team (CET)

- There is a meeting for CET tomorrow night (Tuesday 6th September)
- Leaflet drop: The possibility of completing another leaflet drop around Calderwood, East Calder before the darker nights was discussed. Unfortunately due to the lack of available volunteers it was decided to re visit this come the Spring time.
- Alternative energy sources on church buildings: A member of the congregation shared an article relating to the use of Solar panels on church buildings. It was wondered whether this would be a possibility at St May’s. It was felt that Carole may well have insight into this so she should be asked regarding it. This will be progressed.

9. Fabric Report

- The Sacristy Ceiling was cleaned during July, mainly to remove the unsightly cobwebs which had accumulated. The Douglas Hall internal walls were also brushed down.
The exterior of the windows in the hall and those in the church which were accessible were all washed at the same time. This cost £100.
- Secondary glazing installation is ongoing at the moment in the church. It is scheduled to be completed this week if no problems arise.
Once the invoice is issued, St Mary's will be liable for the VAT and the net cost will be paid directly by the FCC to Glaze and Save. The VAT will then be reclaimed in due course.
- The Annual PAT visit is scheduled for later this month. This usually costs around £120-130.
- The Annual Gas Check in the Douglas Hall is also scheduled.
- Thanks to Pippa for cutting the grass in the rectory garden during Christine and Ben's holiday.
- Outstanding work needing done includes
reinstating the electronics so that the heaters in the church will operate.
electrical testing of the circuitry in the church, hall and rectory.
Electricians are proving to be extremely elusive, so still on the To Do list.
- Permission sought to purchase a double-sided retractable banner to be used to advertise St Mary's as a wedding venue at Wedding Fares.
Vestry agreed.
- An idea in progress, to use the Douglas Hall as a wedding reception venue, to those that have smaller budget or looking for a smaller more intimate venue.

11. Hall Committee Report:

- Nothing of note.

12. Lay Rep Report:

- Nothing to report.

14. AOB

- Charitable Giving: It was felt by vestry that the matter of Charitable giving needs to be discussed at length and a plan for next year decided. Whether we donate a set amount, to set charities or do a percentage of income and what that should be. It was felt that this is an important

topic and as such should be discussed at the next Vestry meeting with a view to raising it at the AGM.

- It was agreed that the final charitable donation for this year will be made to the Green Room at Kirknewton, to help the people of Kirknewton with their rising energy bills. The amount of £500.00 was suggested and thereafter agreed.
- Craft Fair 24th September up date: The response to the craft fair has been amazing. As it stands, out of a total of 15 stalls available to hire we have 14 confirmed and 1 interested. The cost to hire a stall was set at £15 per table along with a donation for the tombola.

Date of Next Meeting: The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on Monday 3rd October 2022.**