

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting 1st March 2024

1. Attendees:

Rev. Christine Downey
Pippa Crichton
Lord Morton
Mandy Smart
Judy Goodman
Anne Clapham (Zoom)

2. Apologies for Absence:

Wilma Brown
Steve Haigh
Ella Henderson

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

Christine said a prayer and welcomed the attendees to the first meeting of the year.

4. Minutes of 15th January 2024 Meeting

There were some typos noted which will be sent to Pippa to correct. There were no omissions noted from the minutes.

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

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- **Sycamore Tree Update:** The sycamore tree has been successfully taken down and most of the detritus has now been removed.
- **Bell rope:** This has not been progressed with the Scouts. Craig the contractor that is working on the cottage has been spoken to, he has agreed to take a look when he has time.
- **Heat-Hack Net Zero Workshops:** The first workshop has now taken place and was a great success. The attendees found it very interesting and were surprised at the amount of information and possible work there is to undertake. This and more will be talked about in the next workshops.
- **Treasurer's aid Update:** Christine spoke with Denis and he now wishes to take a fall step back from both being the treasurer and Sunday service duties as he is needed more at home. He will however be available for

help if needed. He will also be there to help Pippa with the transition of the treasurer role.

- **Cottage Update:** Christine informed vestry that the cottage is looking amazing and that she is very pleased with how it is looking so far and that should come in on budget.

This week has been all about plastering. All the internal doors are in, flooring in bathroom is down, storage is being made under the bay like windows. The kitchen has been ordered and is due next week (4th March).

- **A71 Signs:** This has not been progressed yet, but Christine knows what it is she would like and where they need to be situated. Christine has also established that there is a fund available to upgrade the signs.

6. Other Matters from Christine

- **Charity Giving Update:** The congregational votes have been received and counted.

The results were as follows:

Mary's Meals: 18

United Nations Crisis Relief: 8

A Child in the Rough: 12

Bethany Trust Edinburgh: 11

Diocese of Jerusalem: 8

Papua New Guinea: 3

Marie Curie: 9

The decisions needed to be made were then, how much St Mary's would like to donate this year? how much to each charity? and how much to keep in reserve for the remainder of the year?

Denis kindly provided the figures we needed to make these decisions. St Mary's yearly income 2022/2023 was a total of: **£44,081**. Therefore, a donation of **7% would be £3,086 or 7.5% is £3,306**.

Vestry all agreed that a donation of 7.5% would be donated.

Following a discussion the following amounts were agreed to be donated to the following charities:

Mary's Meals: £500

United Nations Crisis Relief: £250

A Child in the Rough: £500

Bethany Trust Edinburgh: £500

Diocese of Jerusalem: £250

Papua New Guinea: £250

Marie Curie: £250

Therefore, £2500 would be donated to the above charities now, leaving a total of £806 to be donated later in the year to charities that need it.

It is important to note that, we also have the retiral collections during the year which cover's the Bishop's Lent Appeal and charities such as Missions to Seafarers. They have not been forgotten about.

Vestry would like to say thank you to the congregation for their time and help in making this important decision. If you have any feedback on the process, please let Christine or Pippa know.

7. Treasurer Report

Denis distributed his report which showed that the 27th February 2024 balance in the General Account was £41,767.07 (£69,679.90 previous month).

There is £1702.50 held in restricted funds or for other specific purposes, leaving **£40,064** in unrestricted funds (£67,725 previous month).

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £620.12 (previous month £815.12).

St. Mary's Annual Income to date: £97,157.61

St Mary's Annual Expenditure to date: £103,066.81

- £65,000 has been paid to Done N Dusted for the Kiwi cottage refurbishment since the last meeting. £45,000 was received from the Douglas Trust as a grant towards the work.
- £280 paid to Aquarius Thermal Solutions for Rectory heating repairs.
- £400 paid from Rector's Discretionary Fund for Sunday After Dark Concert.
- A Total of £2980 was paid to Heartwood Tree Care for removing the large sycamore tree.
- £1500 received from the Douglas Trust. This was the quarterly grant.
- SEC Unit Trust half yearly disbursement of £619.16 was received.
- £205 paid to H Lawrie pest control from St Mary's Trust Account.

9. Fabric Report

- **Car Parking:** Christine wished to discuss the issues we have with our car park, and that more and more of the car park is being claimed by traffic cones by the cottage residents.
Ben and Christine did some research into this to determine what if any car parking was dedicated to the cottage residents.

They discovered plans for the area which showed that the resident's parking area was indicated as between the 2 cottages and the hall. A lot of this land has been now converted to gardens for the cottages. Unfortunately, there has been some unfortunate incidents with a resident confronting and getting heated at people parking where they feel they shouldn't.

This has resulted in added stress when Christine knows the car park will be busy for a certain event such as a funeral, and the last thing wanted is a scene happening when people are saying good bye to a loved one.

This situation will possibly happen more as the hall use continues to grow. Which for St Mary's is a positive thing.

This issues somehow needs to be solved, such as a conversation needing to happen with the residents. If you have any thoughts or opinions on this please let Christine or Pippa know.

10. Events Committee:

- Nothing to report.

11. Lay Rep Report:

- **Synod:** Synod this time was a lot about investing in the future. As Christine is now Area Council Convenor, she is aware that there are funds available for small to large projects that will have a positive impact on ministry within the local area and encourage growth. Especially in areas that we are seeing a lot of new builds. If you have any thoughts on such projects, please let Christine know.

12. Eco – Rep Report:

- **Heat-Hack workshops:** Steve was not available for this meeting so there was no report. Christine did want to say to all those involved in the workshops that it's important not to burn yourselves out. Do as much as you can, not every box needs to be ticked straight away.

13. AOB

- **Vestry Training:** There is a training day that is open to all vestry members Saturday 23rd March at St Peters Lutton Place, Edinburgh.
- **Organist Salary:** A concern was raised that Thomas has been doing a lot more than was originally asked of him and that we would potentially lose him if his salary wasn't increased to compensate for this.

Christine informed vestry that Thomas had a pay increase in January. She will confirm exactly what he is on at the moment and ensure that it is within the guidelines. It was also agreed by vestry that when Thomas has been with St Mary's for 9 months (July 2024), his salary will be reviewed.

- **Hall Cleaning:** Unfortunately, the cleaners that we had for the hall are unable to continue, therefore for the mean time Carole is back cleaning the hall. Carole approached vestry and asked if for her time could we donate directly to a Child in the Rough instead, unfortunately this would not be possible. However, vestry are happy to pay Carole for her time and she can thereafter do with it as she wishes.
- **Mar Thoma:** since January Mar Thoma have been paying the new agreed rental of £100 per month.
- **Charity Giving Process:** Following emails between Steve Haigh, Christine and Pippa. Steve wished his disappointment in the process and the way the charity giving was being decided documented in this meetings minutes.

Christine was saddened to hear this, but wished people to understand that the process was very much a learning curve and that we were trying something different and wanted to involve the congregation in the decision making. We are hoping that now we have done it once, next year should go more smoothly.

- **Vestry Emails:** Christine wanted to make vestry members aware that Pippa is very busy in the office and often only just gets everything done in a morning that needs done. If vestry have a quick question they wish to ask by email or directly to Christine that is fine, but if they have anything that will take longer to answer or read could they ask Pippa to pop it on the agenda to be discussed at the next meeting. Christine also stated that she is also very busy so sometimes doesn't get round to emails the same day or the next.

Date of Next Meeting:

The next vestry meeting will be held at **Monday 8th April at 7pm 2024.**

Location to be confirmed.