

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

2nd September 2019

1. Present:

Rev. Christine Downey
Lord Morton
Gavin Craig
Rosie Mann
Ted Tracey-Bower
Carole MacBride
Rona Finlayson
Douglas Walker

2. Apologies for Absence:

Denis King
Ella Henderson
Jane Russell
Margaret Chill

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

Christine said an opening prayer and welcomed the attendees to the meeting.

4. Minutes of August 6th Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on August 6th were approved with no amendments. These will in due course be displayed in the hall and on the website.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- The revised Constitution has been sent to the Diocesan Office for final approval.
- The sewage and rat issues around the grounds at the rectory are all in hand with the relevant authorities and contractors. This will be an ongoing situation at least in the short term.
- Corstorphine Roofing have been engaged by Stewart Lord Morton to do a survey of the roof of the Douglas Hall so that work can be planned to limit any further damage from water ingress.
- The Christmas Fair, to be held on Saturday 16th November. Eight tables will be made available for rent to exhibitors of crafts. An entry fee will be charged to those wishing to attend as potential purchasers of the goods on show and for that seasonal refreshments will be on offer. A Tombola and a Raffle for fundraising purposes will be operated by members of the congregation.
- The new office administrator has been engaged. She is Pippa Crichton and will be working for six hours per week on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Paula McCall has been assisting with training and so for a two week period there will be an overlap and the subsequent extra hours will be paid for.

6. Other Matters from Christine

Christine outlined ideas for a more prayerful start to future Vestry meetings.

One suggestion being that prior to the meeting starting, those around the table would be invited to share their thoughts on God's Influence in My Life (Our Lives) in recent days.

The possibility of Compline or a Prayer Service was also discussed

The exact nature of how this will be progressed was not decided but all in attendance felt that it would be beneficial to us in our consideration of how best to (improve) Stewardship and support Giving Opportunities.

Christine suggested that the Intention of Giving should have more conscious thought put into it and that she planned to address this over the coming months. All too often habit leads to us not considering change, not that many habits are not of great value.

Time contributed and Talents shared are visible signs of giving and hopefully noticed and appreciated but Treasure in the form of financial donation is not as obvious and perhaps needs to be looked at again by all.

During discussions, Ted suggested the occasional introduction of "Loose Change Sunday " when those in the church would be invited to empty their pockets and purses of their loose change and any other monies that they felt willing to give. This in turn led to the discussion that nowadays, many people do not carry loose change or indeed cash. Mention of contactless giving from debit cards was made but not further discussed at this stage. This is something for future discussion.

Rona suggested that due to the need for additional funds to support essential work of an immediate nature, for example the Douglas Hall roof repairs, that a letter should be sent to all of the core members of the congregation asking them to consider making a one off donation towards a fund specifically for such project work. Following discussion, a suggested individual donation of £50-£100 or whatever amount could be (comfortably) afforded would be requested. Rona and Christine will work on the appropriate wording of such a letter and it will be shared with Vestry members for comments prior to being sent to the congregation members on behalf of the Vestry.

Stewart Lord Morton welcomed the willingness of the Vestry to work in partnership with the Douglas Trust on such a major project.

Christine announced that for the next two weeks she would be especially busy with preparations to lead the weekend retreat for new Ordinands which is being held on the weekend of September 14th-15th and unfortunately clashing with the Parish Weekend to Cumbrae and two weddings in St Mary's. Eileen Thompson will lead worship on Sunday 15th and officiate at the wedding that afternoon.

Christine announced that the Ordinations would be held in the Cathedral on Sunday 29th September at 15.30 and all those who wished to attend to hear her preaching would be very welcome.

7. Treasurer's Report

Gavin distributed his report which showed that the end of August balance in the General Account was £19,947.941

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £10,264.30

The Value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on July 31st was £58,425.00 August's figures were not as yet available.

The monies which had originally been regarded as restricted from the booking fees of wedding couples for the payment of Alan Phillips for organist duties, have been reassigned to the unrestricted funds. Alan will therefore receive his fee when the wedding fee of £400 is paid by each couple. This will be paid to Alan once a month, the total being dependant on the number of weddings in the coming month. This decision to change the way that the monies is accounted for was made because in the previous method, it could mean that some monies would span three accounting years.

Following some discussion it was agreed that three local primary schools would each be given £300 from the charitable giving monies. Ratho Primary, Kirknewton Primary and Canal View Primary (Ella to provide info) would all benefit. This money is specifically for use in funds to support children from less privileged backgrounds.

Proposed by Rosie and seconded by Rona, all in agreement

Gavin reported that Jonathan Gibbs would be willing and able to act as Auditor for this year's accounts.

Douglas was thanked for the work that he had done in securing a £250 grant from the Scotmid Community Grant. The money has not yet been received but an invitation will be extended to Scotmid to present the cheque perhaps one Sunday at the end of or after the morning service. The money will be used towards improving accessibility to the hall and church for those with disabilities.

8. Fabric Report

- The reported issues with the Loop system in the church will be investigated later this month, possibly on Friday 20th September and it is hoped that some members of the congregation who use hearing aids will be able to attend and offer comment.
- The ramp leading up to the Douglas Hall has been weeded and pressure washed to remove the mossy build up which was possibly causing the previously reported slippery problem.
- The heating in the church broke down during August. Mr Payne from BEAM Electricals attended to investigate the problem. New cable will be required to be run from the RCD to the heaters in the Sanctuary area for them to be reinstated. It was decided that this should be arranged and that the inclusion of an energy efficient heater for the Vestry, operating from the same circuit if feasible should be explored. The heaters in the body of the church are operating in the meantime.
- A new radiator to replace the one in the Douglas Hall which is visibly leaking, has been purchased and will be installed within the next week or two. Annual checking of the boiler and gas hob will be carried out at the same time.
- PAT testing by TT Testing is scheduled for Wednesday 4th September for all portable electrical appliances in the church and the hall. The annual cost tends to be in the region of £125 including VAT.
- Ted asked whether the dehumidifier in the Vestry might be adapted to allow the collected water to drain directly into the sink to remove the need for the tank which can fill in less than 24 hours to be manually removed and emptied, Carole will make enquiries.
- Christine reported that the heating in the Rectory was not working but that it was due to be attended to on Tuesday under the current contract with Heating Services Scotland.

9. Hall Committee Report:

The plans for the Christmas Fair, which Ella and Rona are coordinating, have been addressed under Matters Arising.

10. Lay Rep Report:

Nothing to report. Next Synod due in October.

11. PVG Report

No incidents had been reported.

Loop system issues being addressed as explained in Fabric Report.

12. AOB

Carole raised the issue of hall cleaning. Due to the increased use of the hall by various groups, hall cleanliness and checking is something that needs to be considered. The attendees were asked to think about this with a view to discussing at a future meeting. It may be necessary to consider employing somebody to regularly check and clean the hall.

13. Date of Next Meeting:

The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on Monday October 7th** in the Douglas Hall.