

The Session met in the Session House on Monday 13 June 2016 at 7.00pm

ACTION

APOLOGIES: All apologies and attendances are recorded on the Meeting Sheet.

PREVIOUS MINUTES:

No corrections noted. Main minutes (08 February 2016) approved by Christine Taylor and seconded by Shena Burgon

Communion minutes (12 June 2016) approved by Anne Legge and seconded by Brian Tait.

MATTERS ARISING:

Thanks to everyone who attended and participated in the afternoon soiree and made it such a successful afternoon.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Spring Clean, it was a very effective day and now we must try and keep on top of things.

The Brighton Praise Group had been a good night with a reasonable attendance. The £300 proceeds have been sent to them to cover their costs.

ROLL: *removed from noticeboard and website copies*

PRESBYTERY REPORT

Changes are afoot in the Presbytery and by next year the aim is that we become a more Missionary based presbytery with the Elders taking a larger part in the organisation. The aim would be to split the time between the essential business matters and to allow more time for education, team building and mutual support. It's a chance for more Elders to get involved and I am hoping that more from our Church will join in. If anyone would like to dip their toe in the water then they could come to a meeting or two and see what goes on for themselves.

It is also intended that some of our meetings will be in different Churches rather than just in Duns. Our May meeting was held in Coldstream and it was a great opportunity to hear about what they do as a Church and to hear what they get up to.

Christine Taylor had attended a conference on disability, Alzheimer's, dementia and mental illness and will become the Presbytery's representative and will report back to all Churches.

Rita Inglis was confirmed as Presbytery Elder for the forthcoming year.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

Their AGM had been held recently and Mathew Knox had been re-appointed as Chair, John Hodgkins as Secretary, Bea Nicholson as Treasurer. Stephen and Elizabeth Turner at the Salvation Army will be moving on as is David Herbert from St Paul's Spittal.

Rena Telfer re-affirmed as our Church representative.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

We welcomed Sarah Weatherburn to her first meeting now that she has taken over from Allan Rodger and will oversee the investments. The last 4 months income and expenditure were reviewed and while expenditure has been as expected there has been a tail off in income latterly. It was agreed that Brian would address the

congregation on Communion Sunday and would thank everyone for their support and encourage an ongoing evaluation of their giving. It was agreed to ask the Session to agree to a sum that the Finance Committee could spend without referring to the Session and would ask that this be set at £1000.

Since the meeting Brian confirmed that we were starting to see the improvements that we saw at the end of last year. Session agreed that £1000 could be spent between Session Meetings.

There would be a series of Coffee mornings culminating in the Xmas Fayre which it is hoped will add to Church funds.

FABRIC

Chris informed the committee that the annual report submitted at Reston was all in order.

Update on works completed – i.e. work on the stonework and alterations to the kitchen.

Chris to seek advice on the problem with some of the stonework as there is evidence of rising damp. This was noted on the last quinquennial report. There are a number of slates that need replacing on the roof. It was suggested that D Eden should be approached as he has a cherry picker. The gutters would be cleaned out at the same time.

The heaters in the session room are working well but still to think about further insulation in the roof space

The Exhibition areas have been completed and the invoice for the carpeting has been passed to Brian Tait.

The Committee suggests that they have a budget of up to £1000 to do general maintenance works as and when needed without having to consult session. Major works would be put to session for approval.

Session agreed to this but asked that Brian Tait be asked before any expenditure. It was agreed that the removal of the pews had been a big improvement and thanks to Neil for sorting out the wall and the erection of the barrier.

The paintwork in the side passage was still to be chased up and sorted. Reg McQueen had offered to help Neil with odd jobs. Neil was thanked for tidying up the garden which was looking very smart.

The choir were still reporting a problem with the speaker at the side and Drummond were to be approached to adapt the PA system.

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

Still to be set up but it would meet before the next Session meeting

SAFEGUARDING

For the recent Annual Inspection of Records, along with providing a list of people who are currently permitted to volunteer with children and vulnerable adults, we were asked to carry out an audit of our process. This activity was undertaken by our current Session Clerk, Rita Inglis.

We probably aren't giving high enough priority to Safeguarding policy and changes. This should become a standard Session agenda item even if there is nothing to report.

On the whole, it wasn't too bad but we do have some gaps which need to be addressed.

Theme 1: Policies etc.

5. Although there has been a Safeguarding panel appointed (one member needs to attend training), we have yet to meet. Although we have no issues at the moment, it would be better to do so before there is one so that we have agreed ideas about how we will handle a problem.

10. We may not be carrying out Safeguarding Service Risk Assessments prior to carrying out activities involving children or vulnerable adults. I am sure that risks are considered but a written record should be made and retained (SG20 which can be downloaded from the Church of Scotland's website)

11. Churches letting their premises to non-church groups should ensure that a copy of the Let Agreement has been signed. The most up to date Let Agreement can be found on the Church of Scotland Website under Law Circulars. Again, not aware that we are doing this.

12. Is the Kirk Session aware of the Disciplinary Code 2012, for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007? I am sure Christine would have covered this but it can be found in Safeguarding Handbook 2. We need to be mindful that there is a process to follow.

Theme 2: Recruitment

16. This one covers joint churches/congregations activity, for example a holiday club which our children may attend as from SAWG. I am not aware of any instances of this being needed but there needs to be a record that we have checked that all volunteers involved have been cleared if the situation ever arises.

Theme 3: Awareness

This really addressed training – Coordinators, Volunteers, Paid Workers (we have just one at the moment - minister) and Session.

Both Dale & Bea Nicholson as Coordinators have attended training

Adam has been appropriately trained

Volunteers – slightly tricky. Volunteers have been appointed because of the life-experience they bring with them and so training feels inappropriate (it isn't mandatory)

but we need to be mindful that if there was ever an incident involving a volunteer, however unlikely this feels, and it transpired that no training had been even offered, we could be in trouble. I have checked the training calendar and there are none scheduled for this area (the nearest being Haddington – it is half a day) so Session needs to decide what to do and advise the Presbytery Safeguarding Coordinator as appropriate.

Session - Recognising that Session has ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety matters which affect the Safeguarding of all persons within the fellowship of the Church

It is expected that the number representing any Session equate to the average number attending a quorate meeting of that Session, should attend training, with new Elders attending as soon as possible after Ordination. The elders at the meeting who were already trained included, Neil, James, Christine, Betty, Elsie and Rita.

It was felt that as we do not do any letting that point 11 did not apply.

The committee made up of Adam, Rita, Bea and Dale would meet before the next meeting.

MINISTER'S ITEMS:

Forthcoming events and services

- 25 June: 10.45am. Service to be conducted by Bob Higham in Adam's absence. The Berwick Royal British Legion standard would be laid up at the service. Christine and James will be on duty and the collection taken in Church will be counted and paid into our bank account and then passed on. Neil will be on Beadle duty. Will need some sort of standard holder to position the standard beside the existing cased standard.
- 26 June: In Adam's absence Bob Higham would conduct the service and Norman Whyte would cover pastoral duties.
- 10 July: All age service to be followed by the annual picnic. Everyone encouraged to attend.
- 11-17 July: In Adam's absence Dr Dane Sherrard will conduct the Sunday's service and Norman Whyte will cover pastoral duties

Scottish Census

Approximately 80 people had completed the census and Bea has produced some interesting charts. However it appears we should not have been included at all.

Methodist church

A letter had been received from the Methodists, their Church is to be put on the market. Anne Wylie had asked if they could maybe meet in the Session room on a Wednesday afternoon once a month – it would be for 15-20 people but they are just investigating things at present and it would be dependent on them being able to sell

their building. This was agreed and we would ask for a £10/time donation if they decided to go ahead.

Lowick

The congregation in Lowick had approached Adam re the monthly services. The congregation is largely housebound and it was felt it was too much for the 3 main members to sustain. They have asked to stop the monthly services and only have occasional ones. The sing-a-long is largely supported by the Berwick congregation. The September afternoon communion will be held there as will Christmas Eve afternoon. The party on the parade day would also be a good time to do a joint service there. It was agreed that Adam would discuss further with the Lowick congregation and ensure that anyone who does not have transport can be covered.

Communion retiring Collections

September collection : Berwick & District Cancer Cars

November collection: Sick Children's Trust

Other

There will be a "Big Sing" here at 3pm 16 October 2016 for Presbytery and Churches in Berwick.

On the 17th may there had been a meeting of the congregation to discuss a possible programme of events. It was decided to try a varied programme which would be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Ideas included soup lunches with informal communion, speakers, a film (Christmas themed "It's a Wonderful Life"), Craft afternoon, trip out, games afternoon. There was a lot on enthusiasm to do something and a wish to build on the togetherness that had arisen from the stewardship season events.

SESSION CLERK ITEMS:

Sid Burgon had indicated that he wished to retire from all active elder duties with immediate effect. There was general concurrence that he would be greatly missed. Rita to write on behalf of Session thanking him for his many years of service. Ila Whitton has expressed a wish to retire from Session Meetings and as a Trustee but she would continue with being an active Elder with door duties and with her district. Rita to write to Ila as well thanking her for her time on the Session and for continuing as an active Elder.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

For the September communion only have 3 trays

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Session Meeting on Monday 12th September 2016 at 7.00pm

There being no further business the Session was discharged with a shared grace.

..... Moderator

..... Session Clerk

