

The Session met in the Session House on Monday 14 November 2016 at 7.00pm

ACTION

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

PREVIOUS MINUTES:

No corrections noted. Main minutes (12 September 2016) approved by Bea Nicholson and seconded by Brain Tait.

MATTERS ARISING:

Reminder to everybody to visit Bible World which will be open to the general public on the Tuesday and Thursday evening.

A big thank you to all who decorated the Church for Harvest. The collection for toilet twinning had raised £760. Also thanks to all the helpers at yesterday's Remembrance Sunday service.

ROLL: *(Will be removed from noticeboard and website copies)*

PRESBYTERY REPORT

Well the new changes have begun and it's been different in Presbytery.

We have had two Professional Development evenings, one on pastoral visiting and the second on developing prayers for Sunday worship. The aim of these evenings are to increase the skills of elders and are open to all elders from the congregations to attend. They are very interesting and I would encourage anyone interested to come along to the next evening. The last meeting was held at the Borders general Hospital and was held jointly with the Presbytery of Melrose & Peebles and was to discuss the spiritual care of folk within the hospital. The next meeting on 6th December will be led by Bea and is on "The Pastoral Care of those with Dementia" so hopefully a few of you will be able to come.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

Lent Lunches: It was agreed that Lent Lunches would be shared by six of the churches so each church hosts and organises one of the events. This entails providing a light lunch (sandwich & traybake plus tea/coffee) and organising a speaker. The theme for 2017 would be hymns, the subject of the speakers' topics. The date we will be hosting is Thursday 30th March 2017. Event typically starts at 12:00 with lunch and speaker at 13:00. Finish by 13:20.

National Day of Prayer: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: This runs from 18th – 25th Jan 2017 and the theme for 2017 is 'Crossing Barriers'. The details of what is happening where and when are still being finalised but any events will be promoted on the intimation sheets, web calendar, posters etc. and support from Session would be appreciated.

Bible World/Mobile: As most will already realise, the Scottish Bible Society's Bible Bus is due to be decommissioned soon and the imminent visit will be its last. It will be at Tweedmouth Community Middle School from 21st to 25th November. The facility is open to the public from 6.30 to 8.30pm on Tuesday 22nd and Thursday 24th. If you have never been before, this will be your last opportunity.

North Northumberland Network: It is difficult to be outward facing without keeping links with as many other local organisations as possible – so that we can spot opportunities as soon as they become apparent. CTB has just joined the NNN. Elders were asked to log on the Churches Together Facebook page and to "like" it.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

At the moment we are running with an estimated £11,000 deficit but it is hoped that with the gift aid tax of approx £5000 plus fund raising from the Christmas Fayre and the Christmas card deliveries plus the continuing of the little house and pigs that we will be able to eat into this by the end of the year.

Sarah is to meet with Rathbones next week.

Brian and Rita were to look at producing a contract of employment for Heather Major.

Rita to look at obtaining stewardship information on money from 121 for next year's stewardship season.

FABRIC

Chris has spoken to I Grieve re the painting needed for the manse and hallway. He has it on his 'to do' list but Chris will continue to chase him re time scale.

The gutters have been cleaned by M Richardson who also replaced the slipped and broken slates. The guttering over the organ fan house at the rear needs to be monitored as it may need replacing with larger guttering.

The tubes and starters have been replaced in the session room by the electrician.

It was suggested that it would be more beneficial to contact a contractor for a quote re the insulation for the session room.

G Paxton pointed out that the railing of the disabled ramp needs repaired. The bench at the front is usually taken indoors and stained or oiled before going back outside in the spring. N.Jordan agreed to have the bench moved into the church for the winter.

The garden needs a bit of attention. N Jordon and G Learmonth will attend to this- all very appreciative of the work done in the upkeep of the garden.

Chris is still waiting to meet with the contractor re the problem of rising damp. Chris will chase.

Children had been seen in the side garden at night and a means of covering the steps into the boiler house will be investigated.

Money had been spent on improving the PA system in the chancel area and it was felt this was a big improvement.

The fire officer had cleared the side gallery for occasional use with up to 60 people. This was to be the limit in both gallery's as the maximum with only one exit.

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

The primary purpose of the meeting was to encourage more members of the congregation to consider becoming a pastoral visitor. Terri Bearhope, who currently works for Seton Care who coordinates volunteer befrienders across the Borders and North Northumberland, was invited to attend and provide an insight into the pros (and cons).

Terri introduced herself and explained what she does with Seton Care volunteers. Regretfully, because of current funding stream, her work is restricted to the Scottish side only. Their process is more formal than ours because there is no existing relationship between visitors and those visited however, both parties generally find the experience rewarding and helpful to the visited. She does visit people first so that she can assess their needs and hopefully match up with a suitable volunteer. She also provided some flyers explaining their work.

It is anticipated that our visitors would see individuals approximately monthly rather than the current quarterly district elder visits.

There was concern raised about how an increase in need could be addressed but it seems that possibly things are happening organically but we need to remain mindful that there are members in need that we are unaware of. It is hoped that the district elders will provide some indication of possible wishes by the next Session meeting (Elsie G has already provided such a list).

Elsie did ask how the visitor might be introduced to the new member – this needs to be addressed by the pastoral group and pastoral committee to ensure that any process is clear, brief and in the best interests of the individual and church. It will probably best be approached on an individual basis.

Post meeting note: After much investigation, it appears that the members of the pastoral care group do not need clearing by the DBS because the frequency of visiting and level of involvement they have with the members does not constitute the levels of personal care and intervention that clearance was intended for. We should however be aware of the potential vulnerability of those visited and possibly encourage visits in pairs?

If a member is visiting other members (friends/neighbours) of their own volition and not in a church appointed role, this is not an issue for the church but we need to be able to distinguish the difference.

It would be helpful if all Elders would communicate to the Pastoral care any member who may need a visit.

SAFEGUARDING

First and foremost there has been no issues to report and hopefully this will continue to be the case. As you will be aware there is now a new safeguarding coordinator. After an initial meeting of the safeguarding committee a number of administrative issues and points to be clarified were raised. Kerry-Anne from the safeguarding service at 121 is looking into some of these and once she gets back to us the necessary steps will be taken.

Everyone is reminded that we have an accident book (situated above the safe) and it is important that it is filled in.

MINISTER'S ITEMS:

Next year's stewardship campaign will be on money and we will need a committee again. We would be looking to plan another event as last year's with hopefully another play and a talent auction. We will look at getting stewardship information from 121. Gift day another possibility. Need to look at ways of making it easier for those who don't attend regularly to give. Also need to highlight the importance of legacies.

The Methodist Church is not quite sold so things still up in the air at present. The Methodist network has asked if they could meet here the 1st Wednesday of each month 1.30-4pm. They will donate similar to the Trefoil Guild.

As part of the Presbytery programme the Ministers had had a night together in Hawick. They had discussed Congregations and how they could work and develop together in the future.

Forthcoming events and services

15 November: Tuesday club meets with Dane Sherrard giving a talk.

20 November: Communion service at 11am and 6pm. Will look at assessing this 6pm service for the future.

26 November: Christmas Fayre 10-12. Please encourage friends and family to attend.
To have access via side door and have music (and heating) in church.

26 November: St Andrew's Day Service

29 November: The Tuesday Group will meet for a soup lunch at 12.30 followed by a short informal communion service.

30 November: Christmas Big Sing: expecting 9-10 schools to participate.

11 December: Service for those who find Christmas difficult at 3pm. Bea and Rita to cover door duties.

20 December: Tuesday Group meet at 2pm for a showing of "It's a Wonderful Life"

24 December: 2.30pm Carol service at Lowick and 11.30pm here. Alan Irvine on door

24 December: 10am service – Rita and McQueen's on door duty.

SESSION CLERK ITEMS:

TC Smiths had been contacted re our Trustee list. They had 4 people on the list as trustees of the Manse: J Armstrong, Cameron Martin, Gordon Learmonth and Brian Tait. It would cost approx £3-400 to change the list so it would be advisable if we chose 4 people that would be unlikely to change. There was no mention of the Church building but it is believed that the deeds had been retrieved from 121 and had been lodged with TC Smith. Will contact them again and seek clarification.

A cheque would be produced for the Let us build a House fund and would be passed to 121.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Beadles: Have fewer people on the rota now so need to find another two to help. Perhaps look at advertising the job again.

Some suggestions were made for prospective new elders and Adam would approach any possibilities.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Session Meeting on Monday 13th February 2017 at 7.00pm

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

..... Moderator

..... Session Clerk