

The Session met in the Session House on Monday 13 February 2017 at 7.00pm

ACTION

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

PREVIOUS MINUTES:

No corrections noted. Main minutes (14 November 2016) approved by Shena Burgon and seconded by Alan Irving. Communion minutes (20 November 2016) approved by Shena Burgon and seconded by Alan Irving. Short Session meeting (08 January 2017) approved by Shena Burgon and seconded by Alan Irving.

MATTERS ARISING:

25 People had attended the soup lunch followed by Communion on the 29th November and these figures should be included in the future on the communion minutes. Thanks to Susan and Neil for doing the soup lunch.

Thank you to John Inglis for hanging the toilet twinning certificates outside the toilets. St Andrews Club will not have a service this year as the service is not well attended.

The Big Christmas Sing had raised £552 for Christian Aid and the Church had been full with both galleries in use.

The service for those who find Christmas difficult had been well attended with about 25 present and the majority had come together for tea, cake and chat at the end.

Thanks to Alan Irving for his help at the Christmas eve service.

We had discussed the need for new Beadles and Reg McQueen was now helping.

Prospective new elders: George Paxton had declined as he felt he was too old. Allison Longbone has asked that we approach again next year. Linda Bankier was a yes and Sarah Weatherburn and Dale Hall were thinking about it. A meeting will be arranged to give them an understanding of the role. Primary responsibility would be Session meetings and they wouldn't necessarily have a district.

Louise Newton had indicated that she would now come off sabbatical.

A letter had been received from the solicitors confirming they do hold the deeds for the Church as well as the manse. Trustees for the Church are: James Armstrong, Gordon Learmonth, Brian Tait, Cameron Martin and Allan Rodger. Trustees of the Manse are: James Armstrong, Gordon Learmonth, Brian Tait and Cameron Martin. It was agreed to update both sets of trustees at the same time as updating the title on the Church to title absolute in January 2018.

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

Additions:

By Resolution of the Kirk Session:

Removals:

By Resolution of the Kirk Session:

By Certificate of Transference:

By death:

PRESBYTERY REPORT

We had started our December Presbytery meeting with a fascinating session on Caring with Dementia from Bea and assisted by Linda. It gave everybody plenty to think about and challenged peoples preconceptions and having Linda there to answer questions was very helpful.

Over refreshments we had a presentation to Bill Landale who has stepped down from his position as Associate Minister and Locum for the parishes of Chirnside linked with Hutton, Fishwick and Paxton.

We had a discussion and vote on an Overture under the Barrier Act which had been passed down to all Presbyteries from the General Assembly to consider regarding proposed changes to the way Ministers are classified. It was felt the proposed legislation was not needed and would make an arbitrary and divisive classification of Ministers. Our presbytery voted not to approve the changes and our vote has been passed back to the General Assembly.

Bruce Neill has been nominated as Moderator for the 2017/2018 year.

The fabric committee had updated how much individual congregations could spend without gaining permission from Presbyter- £5000 incl VAT on any one property in any year or £10,000 incl VAT in any one year. For sums over £50,000 incl VAT application must be made to the Presbytery Fabric and Glebe Committee, the Presbytery Planning Committee and the General trustees of the Church of Scotland- applications to be made through the Presbytery Clerk.

The annual Inspection of records will be in the portacabin at Reston Church at 7pm on Wednesday 26th April.

We do require a minute affirming that all the congregations' properties have been inspected during 2016 and that the Property register and Manse condition Schedule have been duly attested. Following the quinquennial property inspection in 2012, we need an interim inspection to be done this year preferably before the annual inspection of records. The result of these inspections should be in the records and a copy sent to Bob Kaye.

There has been amended advice distributed on Data protection which Bea has covered.

We had a full day meeting on Saturday with the morning taken up with two speakers on "Areas of change – what parts of our Presbyterian heritage can be let go and what we must hold on to" from Grant Barclay a past convenor of the Assembly Council and Sandy Forsyth a lecturer at Glasgow University.

Nathan Hood has been nominated to be the Presbytery's youth rep at the General Assembly.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

Churches Together meetings will be at SAWG from 9th March and will be on the second Thursday of alternate (odd numbered) months for the time being – in the Session Room 11.30 – 14.00.

We will be hosting the Lent Lunch on Thursday March 30th 2017

Good Friday walk of witness (14th April 2017). Depart 10.45 – singing top of Marygate at 11

Once the Methodists Church shuts the Methodist Network will use the Session Room on the first Wednesdays of the month.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

There had been a strong finish to the church year, with income from regular giving remaining steady, some donations, strong fundraising from the Fayre (1270), sale of Christmas cards and Postal service, a donation from the Guild (1240) and a good tax claim amounting to circa £9000.

The gift aid claim was higher than expected, in part due to the reclamation of tax on a one-off sizeable donation made in 2015. The gift aid claim included a claim made on open plate donations. The investments had produced a yield of £6229 for 2016, and the market value of the portfolio was £198,728. Donations were down approx £6000 on last year but this was mainly due to a £5000 donation last year and the loss of some of our members over the year. The expenditure was up partly because it included two years electricity as none had been paid the previous year due to an error from the electricity supplier.

Thanks were given to both Brian and Grace for their hard work.

It was agreed to accept the accounts – proposed by Alan Irving and seconded by Gordon Learmonth.

It was proposed to have the AGM on 20th March 17 @7pm, Session Room and agreed by all.

It was proposed and agreed to vary fees for weddings and funerals as follows:

Weddings - £70 for organist, £50 for registrar, £50 for church officer, £150 for use of church = £320

Funerals - £70 for organist, £50 for church officer, £100 for church = £220

Leaflets on financial stewardship from 121 were circulated and it was agreed to obtain some for distribution to the membership in the June magazine along with an A5 leaflet of our own showing our annual expenditure.

Heather Major's employment had commenced on 1st Feb 17 initially for a six month period. So far she had been for one Sunday, assisted with the Sunday Club and been at a Youth Club meeting.

FABRIC

G Learmonth & N Jordan have tidied the garden and the seat has been moved indoors for the winter. It is to be stained before going back outside. Thank were given for their hard work.

The boiler in the kitchen has been repaired. Also the immersion heater has been replaced.

The gate and railings on the access to the boiler room have been replaced. Thanks again to Neil for this.

There was a problem with the light in the session room which caused the circuit breaker to trip. This was found to be caused by a leak in the roof. There were various 'suspect' areas which have been repaired but further checks will be made when the weather improves. It may be the case that the roofing felt will need to be replaced.

I Grieve will attend to the painting needed for the manse and hallway in springtime.

Chris is meeting with Hutton Stone on 13th February to check the stonework re the damp problem. Also the stone at the ramp is deteriorating. The outcome will be reported at the next meeting.

M Richardson has given a quote for insulating the roof above the session room at a cost of £1890 + VAT. It had been agreed at an earlier meeting that we would do this, as the room while warmer than it had been, could be better and while costs are important, it was more important that the room was used and welcoming. It was agreed to obtain a second quote and to go ahead with the work.

The gas board conducted the annual service at the manse. It was mentioned that as the boiler is fairly old, consideration should be made re replacing it. Adam confirmed that w this was not an immediate requirement but something to bear in mind for future years.

Reg McQueen to be asked if he would join the Fabric Committee.

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

The pastoral committee met on 23rd November 2016. The primary purpose of the meeting was to continue the review of current districts, with attention paid to members who may benefit from more regular visits by the pastoral team.

The minister is currently looking after both Lowick (19) and Allan Rodger's district (3), which is unsustainable; this is being addressed. George Paxton is currently delivering to district (13 – was Christine Taylor) and will be asked whether he is prepared to make this permanent. Evelyn

Mavin is currently delivering to district 7 (was Joan Jones) and will also be asked whether she is prepared to make this permanent.

In all districts mentioned, anyone who genuinely doesn't want a visit will be transferred to "postal".

A few members had been identified by their elders as possibly benefitting from more regular contact and are to be transferred to the Pastoral team.

No members in other districts had been identified for either pastoral or postal. Please would elders advise whether or not they have any requirements?

It was noted that several our members are enjoying regular visits from members who are not on the Pastoral team. These have now been identified and the visitors will be encouraged to become part of the team. The team will ensure that the district elder is aware of these additional visits and ask whether it is okay to transfer their members to pastoral. If any elder is able to commit to becoming a regular visitor, please identify themselves to Betty Mathieson. Various congregational members are also being approached.

The group have now been made aware that there is no longer a requirement for pastoral visitors to be cleared by DBS, as long as they are only visiting members and don't undertake any personal care tasks etc.

The pastoral care group currently has 9 members, shortly to increase to 11 with Mr & Mrs McQueen joining, who are visiting 15 Members.

SAFEGUARDING

No new items.

DATA PROTECTION

There has been an adjustment to the guidance from Church of Scotland about obtaining explicit permission from members that we hold their details. Based on the previous guidance, every member was sent a form explaining the requirement. Most returned them (thank you). A few asked that their lines be either lifted or that they were removed from the roll. A further number have yet to return the forms.

As we can be confident that members who have yet to return the forms were made aware that they were on the roll at least twice, we can now take it that they are content to remain. This means that our plan to address the omissions for the end of 2017 can now be cancelled, but there will be annual reminder, in both the Kirk News and on the website, that members should let us know if they wish to be removed or there are any changes to their details.

A sub-note to this is a continuing vigilance that we fully comply with the Data Protection Act when it comes to personal information held. The Data Protection Officer should carry out an annual inspection to confirm compliance.

It was agreed to adopt the SAWG Privacy Policy, Proposed Gordon Learmonth and seconded Betty Mathieson. It was agreed to adopt the SAWG Data protection document with a change to the section regarding sensitive personal data following the change in guidance, proposed Brian Tait and seconded Alan Irving.

Both policies to be reviewed annually at the first full meeting of each year.

MINISTER'S ITEMS:

Adam will be off for two weeks, 22 March – 2nd April and 3-9th May. Bob Higham will stand in for both services and pastoral care will be organised.

Heather major has started work and was assisting with the youth club which will in future have 2 groups one of middle school age(6-7.30pm) and one High School age (7.30-9pm). She will be coordinating more messy church events and the first two will be held on 15th April 4th July 2-4pm.

It was agreed to do more joint services at Lowick starting with the Maundy Communion service which would be at 7pm at Lowick. As parking was an issue during the Party on the Parade it was also agreed to hold that Sunday service at Lowick.

Communion retiring collections:

March – Talking Newspaper

June – Bikes for blood

September – Alzheimers café

November – to be decided

Forthcoming events and services

21 February : Presbytery development meeting on visitation at 7pm

28 February : 10-12 pancake coffee morning

12 March : Communion at SAWG 11am & 6pm. The evening service will be more informal
In the chancel area.

20 March : AGM at 7pm

1 April : Male Voice Choir

8 April : Spring clean of Church 10-1pm

13 April : Maundy Thursday communion 7pm at Lowick

14 April : Good Friday service 7pm
16 April : Easter all age service
22 April : Coffee Morning 10-12
29 April : Berwick Arts Choir

SESSION CLERK ITEMS:

A member had asked about whether sermons or parts of a church service could be made available online to allow anyone unable to be at Church to view. We would look to see if we could find someone to do this.

Volunteers are sought to help assist at coffee mornings particularly during the summer months.

It was agreed to investigate the possibility of removing part of the railing in the chancel area to open up the dais.

Communion elements as follows:

March – Bea and Beth

June – Beth and Ila

September – Ila and James

November – James and Shena

If Ila is unable to do then Brian & Grace volunteered their services.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Request a volunteer to stand in for Neil at the March communion.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

Session Meeting on Monday 19th June 2017 at 7.00pm

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

..... Moderator

..... Session Clerk

