

St Mary's Episcopal Church, Aberfoyle
Rector: Revd. Richard Grosse

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Minutes of Vestry Meeting

Held in the Church Room on 28 April 2010

Present: Mark Seymour (Chairman); Richard Grosse (Rector); Barbara Carruthers; Susan Forsyth; Jonny North; Bill Richardson; Margie Stephen and David Thompson.

1. The meeting commenced at 7.30pm with a prayer.
2. **Apologies:** Nick Cooke; Philip Gaskell; Margaret Johnson; Peter Joynson; Hannah Sanderson and Anne Winther.
3. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3.1 **Matters Arising**

None

4. **Casting the Net**

4.1 In the following paper prepared, by Mark Seymour and circulated to Vestry well before this meeting, the Casting the Net process was outlined and Vestry requested to agree to engage with the Casting the Net initiative. This paper followed an earlier meeting between the Rector, Susan Forsyth, Karen Facey and Mark Seymour, the purpose of which was to find out in more detail what would be involved should the Vestry decide to get involved with the CTN process. The paper read as follows:

Considerations for the Vestry

As you may know we are being asked to consider commitment to the Casting the Net programme initiated by Bishop David in the Diocese

The process, if the Vestry decides to commit to this initiative is as follows.

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| 1 | The Vestry commits to the process | This is merely to indicate an interest in the initiative, and in no way commits us to actually carry out the programme or implementing anything |
| 2 | The Rector writes to the Bishop to notify the commitment | A Mission Planning group is set up by the Congregation. A diocesan facilitator meets to discuss with this group |
| 3 | The Bishop (or one of his officers – in this case Karen Facey) responds | The purpose of the Bishop's response is to agree the date for a meeting with the Rector |
| 4 | The Bishop meets the vestry | The Bishop meets the Vestry and explains what is involved. One of the Diocesan Officers (Karen) will be at the meeting |
| 5 | A decision to proceed or delay or withdraw is made | This decision is made at the meeting between the Bishop and the Vestry |

6	A facilitator visits the Church	The aim is to find out about our church and congregation as well as the Community within which we live. Audit Process
7	A songs of praise or other activity is held	The congregation as a whole involve themselves in the process
8	A whole day Workshop	The whole congregation is involved in a full day (10 am to 4pm) workshop. We choose which of the nine marks of Mission are appropriate to us. Results in draft action plan
	Presentation	A presentation for our own Mission Planning group is included in the workshop
9	Planning Group meeting	The Mission Planning group meets the Facilitator and creates an Action Plan
10	Vestry approves Action Plan	Vestry takes 'ownership'
11	Deliver Action Plan to congregation	Bishop visits and delivers the Action Plan to the congregation
12	Review	Casting the net is reviewed at regular intervals – 6 monthly ideal. Continued development

4.2 The paper was discussed for about an hour. In the discussion it was emphasised that in committing to the process Vestry is expressing interest in the initiative and not necessarily, at this stage, in carrying out the programme itself. Indeed, Vestry recognises that we require a much fuller understanding of what is involved and that this will be gained as the process proceeds. It was emphasised that we could withdraw from the process at various stages.

It was noted that James Petticrew is on sick leave at present. The result is that the only Casting the Net Diocesan Facilitator at present is Karen Facey. So it is likely that she will be acting as facilitator for St Mary's. As part of the process the Vestry and congregation will set up a Mission Planning Group. This is likely to comprise eight members, mostly drawn from the congregation, preferably with only one or two Vestry members at most. It was emphasised that the congregation is not expected to encompass all nine Marks of Mission and could choose as few as one. The audit process is to find out our strengths and weaknesses as a congregation. Growth is not just about recruiting newcomers to our congregation but about assessing our practical strengths and building upon them. We should remember that we are not alone, that other congregations are already well underway with their programmes and that support will be available to us all along the way.

4.3 Vestry unanimously agreed that it wishes to progress the Casting the Net process and asked the Rector to write to Bishop David confirming this resolution. *Action: Richard Grosse*

5. Secretary's Business

5.1 *Fire Risk Assessment*

A copy of this carried out by Alpha Fire Risk Consultants Ltd on 27.11.09 is now filed in the cabinet in the Church Room. It must be kept available for inspection by the local Fire and Rescue Service, whenever necessary and available for consultation by contractors carrying out any alterations or modifications to the premises.

5.2 *Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)*

In the light of the recent concerts in St Mary's our licence cover has been amended with CCLI. Our licence to 31.12.10 comprises a Performing Rights Society Licence which covers us for up to six live concerts or playing of recorded music per annum and a Church Copyright Licence which permits the copying of hymns (by re-typing from a hymn book for example). However, this does not permit facsimile copying (by photocopying or scanning of words or music directly from a hymn book for

example). To do this we would need an additional Music Repro. Licence at an extra cost of c£30 p.a. to the total of c£90 we are now paying.

The Secretary has arranged with CCLI to be St Mary's contact on all such matters so any further licences required for any other activities such as showing a film etc. should be referred to him.

5.3 *Term of Office*

The Secretary respectfully reminded Vestry that his agreed term of two years expires at the end of this year and would not wish to extend this should it be requested.

6. **Rector's Report**

Richard Grosse referred to his Weekly Newsletter which he felt contained all that he had to report to date and otherwise had nothing to add at present.

7. **Lay Representative's Report**

Philip Gaskell, in his absence, had reported as follows via the Secretary:

'The last Area Council Meeting was in January and I reported on that at our last Vestry meeting. the Annual Synod was held in Perth in March and I reported on that in the last Church Magazine. I still expect to sit down with Richard Grosse to agree how we two can contribute best to Area Council as a learning/sharing/educating group'.

8. **Music & Worship**

8.1 *Margie Stephen reported:*

Introduction of John Bell's hymns recommended. 'Blue book' (Church Hymnary-4th Edn.) also has a wide range of hymns we could consider, although unfamiliar tunes may be a challenge. It was pointed out by the Chairman that purchase of alternative hymn books would have to be costed and approved by the Treasurer. Vestry was reminded by Jonny North that we have copies of English Praise gifted by his mother in his father's memory which might be considered for alternative hymns. Margie Stephen also suggested an occasional rehearsal led by David Wilson to introduce new hymns and tunes would be invaluable.

It was agreed that Richard Grosse and Margie Stephen should consider the above ideas and make recommendations. *Action:Richard Grosse/Margie Stephen*

8.2 The possibility of attracting Stephen McIntyre as occasional guest organist was discussed. This would incur a fee plus travel expenses per service. It is understood Jean Sykes would welcome such an arrangement. It is thought that Stephen McIntyre will be looking for a post elsewhere from October, so any arrangement with St Mary's might be short term. Mark Seymour will follow up.

Action:Mark Seymour

8.3 Barbara Carruthers proposed that an alternative to the present 'Gloria' tune be considered.

9. **Communications**

Barbara Carruthers has persuaded 'Park Life' magazine to include a notice about St Mary's in the June/July issue. Vestry expressed appreciation of her weekly 'Pew Notes'.

Draft Copies of the 'Welcome to Aberfoyle' leaflet prepared by Barbara Carruthers and aimed at visitors staying in the Aberfoyle area have been seen by Vestry and approved as a positive initiative. This version will be piloted in Aberfoyle before going further afield. Mark Seymour offered to arrange materials and printing. *Action:Mark Seymour*

The target for this leaflet is hotel, guest house and B&B bedrooms and will be additional to a single information sheet detailing St Mary's services which is for display in reception areas of the above establishments as well as in retailers, notice boards, etc.

10. Financial Stewardship Team Report & Church Giving

In a written report circulated well before the meeting the Treasurer noted that:

10.1 *Cash Flow*

The cash balance in the General and Church Giving Funds bank account stood at £2,700 at end March and is decreasing in the face of higher Linkage costs. The arrears of the Gift Aid tax claim for 2008-09 have now been received, and the Rector's accrued Linkage mileage claims also settled.

10.2 *Rectory / Church Room Maintenance*

Recent repairs to the roof and outside woodwork on the Rectory, plus the re-painting of the exterior which is due to be carried out this spring as agreed by Vestry with the Rector, are costing £3,250. This will be the first such expenditure on the Rectory building for several years.

10.3 *Linkage Costs*

Recent SEC financial policy decisions affecting clergy stipends and Pension Fund contributions payable by Vestries, plus the exceptional expenditure on Rectory maintenance, will lead to significantly higher running costs to the Linkage this year forecast at £43,850. This will require a commensurate increase in St Andrew's 40% contribution, which is being agreed.

10.4 *Fundraising: Church Concerts*

Some 90 people attended each of the concerts given by the Lyra and Telemann Ensembles on 24th and 28th March to celebrate the completion of the Church renovation. Musically, the events were of a high standard, and many of the audience who had not been to the Church before were visibly impressed by the quality of venue which St Mary's now provides for such occasions. Total income from tickets and donations, plus a Community Grant from Stirling Council, amounted to £1,967 and the final surplus for St Mary's funds will be £870. Sincere thanks are due to the Chairman for all his efforts in organising publicity for both concerts to such good effect.

10.5 *Church Heating System: Renewable Energy Supply*

As noted in my last report, Emotion Energy of Milnathort, who work with Bissets of Thornhill to supply renewable energy systems, have provided an initial quotation for the installation of four air source heat pump units in the Church and a PV solar panel kit installed on the Rectory roof. This specification will be used as the basis of grant negotiations for potential CARES funding which is available to community organisations. Subject to further progress, a costed proposal will be prepared for Vestry's consideration.

10.6 *Congregational Stewardship*

In the light of the discussion on the 2009-10 budget at the last meeting and current trends in Linkage costs noted above, Vestry will be asked later this year to agree an appropriate form of request to all members of St Mary's to review their personal level of regular giving. It is now 4 years since the last comprehensive Stewardship campaign was run in the early autumn of 2006.

10.7 *Church Property Deeds - Boundary Adjustment with Aberfoyle Motors Ltd*

Legal fees of £115 plus VAT incurred by the Diocesan Registrar in updating the Deeds for St Mary's have been paid to J & H Mitchell & Co at the request of the Diocese.

10.8 *Church Giving Fund*

As agreed by Vestry, a donation of £400 has been made to Medecins Sans Frontieres UK to support MSF's front line medical relief for the victims of the Haiti earthquake disaster; this amount included the £100 proceeds of a special retiring collection after a Sunday service in January. A donation of £100 has also been made to Mercy Ships UK, as agreed. Letters of thanks from both charities can be viewed on the Church Room notice board.

10.9 In addition to the above the Secretary reported that Jean Sykes wished to mention to Vestry that the local Annual Christian Aid appeal collection starts 09.05.10. She wonders if St Mary's is able to make a

donation this year, but understands that the next allocations from the Church Giving fund are not decided until the July 2010 Vestry meeting. The Chairman undertook to raise this matter with the Treasurer.

Action:Mark Seymour/Nick Cooke

11. Church Renovation Project & Additional works to the Main Contract

In a written report circulated well before the meeting the Treasurer noted that:

11.1 Cash Flow

The working balance at end March of £12,500 in the Renovation Fund bank account includes the £10,000 short term SEC loan, which is repayable after all outstanding bills and grant claims have been cleared.

11.2 Main Contract – Defects Liability Period

A final list of snagging works to be carried out by Hunter & Clark before the expiry of the contract defects liability period on 30th April 2010 has been agreed and notified by the Architect. This includes the re-painting of timber on the porch where the new paint work has flaked and cracked over the winter.

11.3 Interpretation Panel

The finished panel was erected by Crawford & Matheson on the west wall of the nave just in time for the first of the March concerts and so far has attracted very positive comment. The cost of £5,000 plus VAT has been capped at the discretion of the Architect and has been included in eligible HLF grant expenditure.

11.4 Grant Income

A final Heritage Lottery Fund grant payment of £7,235 has been agreed and received, making the total value of HLF funding for the Renovation project £89,945, which represents 98% of our approved maximum ceiling grant figure. A further re-payment of £6,914 of VAT on eligible contractors' invoices has also been received under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

11.5 Awards For All Scotland – Grant Expenditure

Following confirmation and receipt of the grant award of £9,847 previously notified to Vestry, the full upgrading of the Church sound system has now been satisfactorily completed by Scot Audio, who have also supplied the new PA system for use by the 'Thirsty' youth group. A total of 20 new 'Warwick' design chairs have now been purchased via Hayes & Finch, and the four short pews which they have replaced have fetched a total price of £600. The first stage of replacing the outside railings has also been carried out by Iron Horse Studios, with the bulk of the work to be carried out over the summer.

11.6 Additional Works – External Lighting

A specification and drawings for an external lighting scheme for the Church has been prepared by Cotterell Lighting. This will be used initially to secure an initial opinion from the Planning Authority and reaction from neighbouring properties, with no financial commitment at this stage.

12. Health & Safety

12.1 Officer

Alex Haig has declined an invitation to take on the role of St Mary's Health & Safety Officer. Therefore, the quest continues. It was agreed that the Diocese should be appraised of the situation when dealing with 12.1 below.

12.2 Policy Statement

It was agreed that the standard policy model provided by Diocese should be adopted and the Diocesan Office advised accordingly.

Action:David Thompson/Mark Seymour

13. Concerts in St Mary's

13.1 Review of recent events

These had been a great success, both in fund raising, but above all in the numbers attending from across the local and wider communities. The key figures had already been noted at 10.4 of Treasurer's

Report. Vestry expressed its thanks to Mark Seymour for his tireless efforts in organising and promoting these concerts so effectively.

13.2 *Future Opportunities*

The Kiev Accordion Duo are scheduled for a return visit to St Mary's on 13 July. It is hoped to invite the Glasgow Cathedral organist to give a recital later in the year and to have a Carol Concert on Sunday evening 12 December led by members of Strathendrick singers.

Mark Seymour indicated that he wished to hand over responsibility for organising future events if possible and he believes Mark Duncan may be willing to be recruited to this role.

Action:Mark Seymour

14. AOCB

14.1 *Margie Stephen's Retirement*

As already indicated in the latest edition of the Church Magazine, Margie Stephen intimated to Vestry that with effect from June 2010 she will not continue to assist the Rector at Sunday morning services on a regular basis. Her decision follows lengthy discussion with the Rector and mixed emotions on her part. However, Margie recognises that she has reached the point where the physical strain is becoming too much.

Vestry fully understood and accepted Margie's decision. The Chairman recalled how Margie had been involved with the running of St Mary's ever since joining Vestry in 1982. He said 'your service has been extraordinary and we will miss you' and added that the congregation would doubtless wish to recognise her contribution later in the year.

14.2 *Community Trust Meetings*

The Rector reported that he had started to use the Church Room as a venue for these meetings and would like to do so with Vestry's approval. This was agreed. At present no rental is being charged for use of the Room, but the Rector thought, in due course, a donation to St Mary's for use of the facility might be suggested. The question of insurance was raised. The Secretary will check this out and advise the Rector.

Action:David Thompson

14.3 *The Thirsty Group*

A request has been received to ask if they may store equipment in the Church Room. This will depend on whether space permits

Action:Richard Grosse

14.4 *Leaflets in Church*

Receptacles for the tidy display of leaflets are being arranged for the back of the Church.

14.5 *Organ Gap*

The fabric temporarily filling this gap will be made permanent.

Action:Mark Seymour

14.6 *Hard copies of Minutes*

It was pointed out that those members without Internet access were presently unable to read Minutes of Vestry Meetings. It was agreed to place one copy of the latest Minutes in the Church and Church Room from now on.

15. Date of Next Vestry Meeting – Wednesday 21 July 2010

The meeting closed with prayer at 9.35pm.

Signed.....

Date.....