

# St Mary's Episcopal Church, Aberfoyle

Rector: Revd. Richard Grosse

[www.stmarychurchaberfoyle.org.uk](http://www.stmarychurchaberfoyle.org.uk)

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## Minutes of Vestry Meeting

Held in the Church Room on 28 July 2010

**Present:** Bishop David Chillingworth; Mark Seymour (Chairman); Richard Grosse (Rector); Nick Cooke; Susan Forsyth; Philip Gaskell; Margaret Johnson; Peter Joynson; Jonny North; Bill Richardson; Margie Stephen and David Thompson

1. The meeting commenced at 7.35pm with a prayer.
2. **Apologies:** Barbara Carruthers; Karen Gaskell; Hannah Sanderson and Anne Winther
3. **Casting the Net:**

3.1 Mark Seymour welcomed Bishop David who had come to talk to Vestry about Casting the Net and to discuss with us how St Mary's could engage in this initiative. The meeting would be mainly devoted to this topic.

3.2 Bishop David introduced the Casting the Net concept emphasising that the initiative is the result of much thought and discussion by many across the Diocese over a long period. It is not an initiative hastily conceived by the Bishop!

3.3 Mark Seymour commented that St Mary's Vestry had spent an 'Away Day' in 2008 led by Alison Peden and Karen Gaskell which produced stimulating thought and discussion. Casting the Net has somewhat different objectives and expectations but the Away Day at least had started us thinking in the right direction

3.4 It was emphasised by Bishop David that the prime objective of Casting the Net is spiritual growth and mission rather than solely increasing our numbers. We need to journey with people who are searching and should be part of the destination, whatever that might be. Experience has shown that CTN works, but slowly. In particular, Compass, the Christian Education Programme, is particularly effective. Bishop David referred to living the Nine Marks of Mission focusing on Mission Action Planning and the work to be undertaken by our Mission Planning Group

3.5 In the discussion that followed some key points noted were:

- The next stage in progressing the Casting the Net process is for Vestry to set up the Mission Planning Group.
- Our Mission Planning Group should ideally comprise 6-8 members of the congregation of whom some, but definitely **not** all, should be Vestry members.
- Our Group would be guided by two Facilitators (one lay and one clergy) in preparing the Mission Plan. Other support should be available from the Diocese.
- We should expect to have about 4 meetings over a period of a year, one of which, will be a meeting of the full congregation who must be involved throughout.

- An Audit of St Mary's current strengths and weaknesses should be undertaken by the Group. The objective should be to assess our potential.
- The Mission Action Group identifies which of the Nine Marks of Mission are to be adopted. These may be as few as one or two marks, depending on the outcome of the audit.
- The congregation should be made aware not only of what the Group proposes we will do in Casting the Net, but also what we are not doing and why. It is important that the Congregation as a whole signs up to the eventual plan.
- The final event will be the return of Bishop David, who will 'mark' the plan once agreed at a service involving the whole congregation. The plan may possibly be a rolling three year plan, one which will be reviewed and altered regularly.

3.6 In concluding, Bishop David summarised the steps that the Group then needs to take. These are described in 14 panels on 4 sheets circulated to Vestry members at this meeting. Additional information to the above can be found on the Diocesan website.

3.7 Mark Seymour thanked Bishop David for coming to talk to St Mary's Vestry on Casting the Net. We now had a much clearer picture of what we can do, how to move forward and the motivation to succeed in this initiative.

3.8 Before leaving the meeting at 9.05pm Bishop David led the Vestry in prayer.

3.9 Mark Seymour proposed that an additional Vestry meeting dedicated to setting up the Casting the Net Mission Planning Group should be held. The date of this meeting has still to be agreed.

*Action: Mark Seymour*

Philip Gaskell expressed his willingness to lead on the Mission Action Planning Group.

#### 4. Minutes:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4.1 Matters Arising  
None

#### 5. Congregational Stewardship

5.1 The Treasurer's Financial Stewardship Team Report to Vestry dated 16.07.10 was circulated to all members with the Agenda for this meeting. In this report the section on Congregational Stewardship together with the attached Financial Projection for the year to 30.09.10 highlighted an anticipated operating deficit of some £3400 compared with a marginal surplus as originally budgeted.

5.2 In his Treasurer's Report Nick Cooke made the following proposal:

*In 2006, St Mary's ran a very successful stewardship campaign, which involved a personal approach to all members via our network of Area Contacts, using a joint letter signed by the Rector and Vestry Chairman providing key information about St Mary's financial position. The campaign had a specific financial target, which was exceeded.*

*It is proposed that Vestry authorises the Stewardship Team to adopt a similar approach as part of a*

*process asking all members of St Mary's to review their current level of giving. I am willing to initiate this in conjunction with other Team members, with action to be taken over the next 3- 6 months.*

*I am conscious of the congregation's enormous generosity in response to the Renovation Appeal. I therefore suggest that every effort is made to increase the number of regular donors beyond the current list, e.g. among our more casual or distant worshippers. In this way, this stewardship initiative may provide an added dimension to launching the 'Casting The Net' programme. As a minimum target, the new initiative should aim to raise an additional £5,000 in regular annual giving to St Mary's, including Gift Aid.*

*Vestry is asked to give its approval to this proposal.*

5.3 Vestry approved this proposal and the Treasurer will now initiate this in conjunction with other members of the team. **Action: Nick Cooke**

5.4 It was agreed to refer to this review as a 'Congregational Stewardship Initiative' – **not** a 'Campaign'

## **6. AOCB**

6.1 Although not discussed at this meeting it should be noted that a Communications Report had been received from Barbara Carruthers and circulated to all Vestry members with the Agenda.

7. As mentioned above (at 3.9) the date for a Vestry meeting dedicated to the Casting the Net process has yet to be advised. The next routine business Vestry meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 27 October 2010.

The meeting closed with prayer at 9.20pm.

Signed.....

Date.....









