

ST. MARYS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ABERFOYLE

Interim Pastor: Rev Canon Dr Alison Peden

www.stmarychurchaberfoyle.org.uk
Charity Registered in Scotland: SCO23266

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL ON SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2020

Present: Mark Seymour, Rev Canon Dr Alison Peden, Elizabeth and Christopher Roads, Alastair and James Gardner, John Willis, Christopher and Judith Poulton, Archie Orr-Ewing, Julie Edmonstone, Mary-Clare Brown, John Dymond, Margie Stephen, George Willis, Robin Hunt, Michael Forsyth, Susan Forsyth.

Mark Seymour welcomed all to the meeting especially our Interim Pastor, Alison Peden who opened with a prayer.

1. Apologies: None
2. Elect Chairman for this meeting: Mark Seymour was asked to be acting Chairman. Proposed by James Gardner, Seconded by Alastair Gardner.
3. Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting: These were agreed to be correct and signed by the acting Chairman. Proposed by: Elizabeth Roads, Seconded by: James Gardner.
4. Vestry Report: Mark Seymour gave a report on the Vestry for the year, which is attached to these minutes.
5. Presentation of Accounts to September 2020: The Treasurer, Alastair Gardner explained the accounts which are attached to these minutes and will be on the St Mary's Website. He thanked Stephen Nesbitt who has signed off these accounts as IFE. He thanked Christopher Roads for his work in arranging a new heating system for the Church and for his work with the Concerts. He concluded by saying we were net neutral and in a good position despite Covid 19 but that this was due to the fact we were not paying a Rector stipend due to Richard Grosse having retired in May.

Mark Seymour thanked Alastair for all his hard work over the year.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Michael Forsyth and seconded by John Willis, and adopted unanimously.

6. Governance - papers attached

The Constitution: Mark Seymour explained that the last Constitution was compiled in 2004, and also that St Mary's and St Andrews should have had a Memorandum of Understanding in place and that this has never the case as far as can be ascertained. The model Constitution has been revised and adapted, the major changes being that on

retrial after 4 years of service Vestry members may be re-elected rather than stand down for a year. Secondly, the Treasurer and Secretary (as ex-officio Members of the Vestry) may be automatically allowed to vote.

The adoption of the new Constitution was proposed by: Elizabeth Roads and Seconded by: Susan Forsyth and adopted unanimously by the meeting.

Memorandum of Understanding: The main reason for this Memorandum is to set out the proportion of costs between the two Vestries of . St Mary's and St Andrews. In the absence of a written Memorandum of Understanding, there has been an informal agreement that costs should be borne as to 60% by St Mary's, and 40% by St Andrews. It appears that St Andrews are concerned at their lack of finances and their income stream is now limited due to them being unable to let out their Hall because of Covid-19. After extensive negotiations it is proposed to reduce their contribution to 35%. St Mary's Vestry has agreed to this on the understanding that it is reviewed on the appointment of a new Rector and also in September 2021 or as and when necessary. St Mary's will now contribute 65% and St Andrews 35% to the running costs of the Linkage.

The new Memorandum of Understanding was Proposed by: James Gardner, and Seconded by: George Willis and adopted unanimously.

7. Lay Representative's Report:

Elizabeth Roads gave a full account of proceedings and her report is attached.

Mark Seymour thanked Elizabeth for all her time and hard work.

8. Appointment of Lay Representative and Alternate Lay Representative:

Elizabeth Roads, Lay Representative Proposed by Margie Stephen and Seconded by Judith Poulton

James Gardner, Alternate Lay Representative. Proposed by Margie Stephen and Seconded by Judith Poulton. Both agreed to unanimously by the meeting.

9. Appointment and Retiral - Members of the Vestry:

It was agreed that the present Vestry would continue throughout the Interregnum and would be reviewed when a new Rector has been appointed. The Congregation approved this.

It was explained by Mark Seymour that Margie Stephen had retired as the Lay Reader after many years of valued service and advice, for which he thanked her. It had been agreed to co-opt her onto the Vestry for the duration of the Interregnum.

10. Children and Vulnerable Adults - Elect PVG Officer

James Gardner Proposed by: Judith Poulton and Seconded by Alastair Gardner and adopted unanimously.

11. Rector Vacancy:

Discernment: Mark Seymour explained that we now have a short list of candidates agreed by the Bishop and the two vestries. The Bishop will decide when the interviews are to take place, most probably by Zoom, because of the current Covid-19 restrictions, but perhaps before Christmas.

Rectory Renovations: Mark Seymour informed the meeting that the Rectory is in need of a thorough modernization. An estimate of costings for the renovation is in the region of £75,000. We will be applying for a grant or a loan from the Province via the Diocese and this needs to be submitted by 13th December for consideration by the Diocesan Buildings Committee and the by Province in January 2021. St Andrews have expressed a wish to cap their contribution at £8,000. Consent will need to be obtained from St Andrews regarding this.

12. AOCB: Christopher Roads wished to put on record our thanks to Mark Seymour for all his hard work throughout this very difficult year. Julie Edmonstone wished to convey thanks to Bill Rootes for taking the services when the church has been open over the last few months. Mark Seymour confirmed that he had written to Theresa Joynson following the sad death of her father, Peter Joynson. George Willis wished to record our thanks to Alison Peden for all her help and support during the Interregnum.

Alison Peden closed the meeting with a prayer.

Date of Next Annual General Meeting: 12th December 2021

Lay Representative Report for AGM - 6th December 2020

The Diocesan Synod on 7 March 2020 opened with remembering those who had died since the last meeting. The charge by the Bishop focussed on being connected. He reiterated the central role played by the various committees of the church and thanked those who contributed to these committees particularly those retiring from their work. He spoke of the need for a continuing ecumenical approach and highlighted the St Andrew Declaration which was a joint initiative between the SEC and the Church of Scotland.

He spoke of his vision for the church and the support that those who work directly for the church, clergy and lay, require. He encouraged members of the church to consider what gifts they could bring and how their faith might be enhanced by becoming more involved. Particular mention was made of the Lambeth Conference later this year and the Year of the Pilgrimage in 2021.

The usual reports relating to the life of the Diocese were presented.

The Bishop put forward a proposal of how the structure of the diocese might be streamlined to allow for more direct links between various roles with the diocese and the boards responsible for overseeing their work. He also asked for a proposal to admit Honorary Lay Canons to be passed.

During words of thanks to those retiring particular mention was made of Reverend Richard Grosse who, together with the Reverend Bob Harley, as made a Canon Emeritus of the Diocese. A small gift was handed to Richard Grosse.

The afternoon ended with the Celebration of the Eucharist.

In August the Diocese arranged meetings for Area Councils which covered two main topics, the role of the Vestry and the way out of lockdown for the churches. Brendan Grimley, who is the chairman of the Administration Board gave a presentation on the role of the Vestry, reminding the attendees of the necessary legislation and good practice to be followed and the need to ensure that constitutions etc are looked at relatively regularly to ensure they are up to date. The second presentation was by the Dean Kenny Rathband and looked at how the church might seek to come out of lockdown and the problems this might cause some charges. The Bishop then gave a presentation on how he saw the future after Covid-19 and the challenges all would face with many businesses having suffered and potential knock on effects on unemployment, reduced income, mental health issues etc. Groups went into breakout sessions after each presentation and questions were put to the presenters. A full report was produced after the event which was useful and interesting. I felt that our Area Council was not as active as others but the large geographical area made meetings more difficult. The Bishop said he would look at how Area Councils might work more effectively in the future.

Elizabeth Roads
Lay Representative
December 2020.

**St Mary's Aberfoyle
Congregational Safeguarding Report December 2020**

Melanie Grosse has retired as Safeguarding Officer both for Vulnerable Adults and Children as from 1st May 2020.

I confirm both to the Vestry and Diocese that:

1. All SEC policies and Child Line Posters are prominently displayed in the Church Hall together with the name and contact details of the Officer
2. The PVG Handbook is to hand and consulted as necessary
3. The Vestry has been made aware of its duties in this regard.
4. The Diocese has requested no attendance at training seminars this year.

An appointment for a Safeguarding Officer both for Vulnerable Adults and Children will be made at our AGM on 6th December 2020

Mark Seymour
Secretary to the Vestry
5th December 2020