

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ELGIN HIGH CHURCH  
CONGREGATIONAL BOARD  
HELD IN THE CHURCH HALL ON TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2008.**

The Minister, Rev. Julie Woods, was in the chair and opened the meeting with a Bible reading and a prayer.

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were accepted on behalf of A Chapman, A Garrow, A Hyland, W Jeans, J Junor, L Mitchell, E Roger, G Roger, E Stuart, M Stuart.

**ATTENDANCE**

There were 37 members in attendance.

**MINUTES**

Gordon Farquhar asked whether the legacies referred to in the minutes should specify who they had been received from. The Minister stated that this was not necessary as the Treasurer's report had provided this information.

Approval of the minutes was then proposed by Mike Crossland and seconded by George Stewart.

**CLERK'S REPORT**

Mr Fraser intimated that he had sent a letter of thanks to Moira Trotter, on behalf of the Board, to thank her for co-ordinating the successful Christmas Bazaar. A letter of thanks had also been sent to Fergus McIntosh in particular for his valuable contribution towards erecting and decorating Christmas trees over the festive period.

A self-assessment questionnaire regarding Food Hygiene/Food Standards in the kitchen etc had been completed and returned to the Moray Council.

Notification of changes to the membership of the Board was sent to the Treasurer for inclusion in the church's annual accounts report

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

A statement of accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2007 will be included in a future issue of the Herald. A deficit of £8,058 for the year has reduced the General Fund balance to £8,303. Appreciation was expressed that fund-raising activities had generated income of £4,279 during the year. Overall expenditure for 2007 was much in line with budget forecasts. The budget forecast for 2008 has been slightly reduced from the actual expenditure for 2007.

Gordon Farquhar sought clarification on a few items of proposed expenditure and asked what scope there might be for reductions to be achieved. Mention was made of a possible stewardship campaign to increase income and this will be considered by Moray Presbytery at a meeting due to be held on 1 May, 2008. Fiona Oswald suggested that a modest increase in weekly offerings from all members of the congregation would eliminate the church's annual deficit.

The Treasurer reported on the new format required for the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December, 2007. All members of the Congregational Board, and Kirk Session, now require to become Trustees of the church. This was accepted by Board members. Those absent from the meeting will be notified of this change. Once the Accounts for 2007 are approved by the Board they will be considered by an independent examiner (Cecil Taylor) before being presented at the Annual Stated Meeting due to be held following the service on 9 March, 2008.

A question was raised by Donald Urquhart as to whether the Walking Group should be included in the list of organisations named in the Annual Report as being within the church. Discussion took place regarding the possible need for risk-assessments and insurance cover. It was decided that the position would be reviewed before the Annual Report is finalised. If appropriate, advice will be sought from the legal department of the Church of Scotland.

Mike Crossland voiced appreciation for all the work undertaken by the Treasurer and this was fully endorsed by Board members.

**PROPERTY REPORT**

Mr Urquhart summarised works completed since the last meeting including the fitting of a security light at the side entrance to the church. Mention was also made of works in hand and those to be undertaken.

The overall Property budget spend for 2007 was £16,980 in comparison to a budget allocation of £14,670. In light of the deficit between church income and expenditure it is recognised that the Property budget for 2008 needs to be considerably reduced. Major repairs undertaken over a number of years mean that the church buildings are wind and watertight and generally in a good state of repair

Reference was made to the considerable time and effort spent on considering the future development of our church buildings. In view of financial constraints it is felt that the time is no longer right to advance such a project in any meaningful way.

The proposed Property budget of £7,500 for 2008 was unanimously approved by Board members.

**SOCIAL REPORT**

Mr Rae reported on the successful Scots night held on the 24 November, 2007. The recent Annual Quiz attracted a commendable entry of 21 teams and Mike and May Crossland were thanked for organising this event. Mention was made of an ecumenical event (Walking Together with Christ) due to take place on the 1st and 2nd of March, 2008. Anyone who can help with sandwiches should contact Anne Rae.

**HALL REPORT**

The Clerk provided a report on behalf of Mrs Garrow. Mention was made of recent and future bookings. A request has been

received for a possible monthly evening booking for the main hall from a local group of the British Sugar Craft Guild. Board members approved the request subject to an evening being agreed which will not clash with church requirements. As it has been almost five years since the hall etc. letting fees have been reviewed Board members agreed that the time is right for a further review. Discussion took place regarding the current rates and possible increases but Board members decided that more information is required before a decision can be made. The Hall committee to be asked to provide some comparisons with the letting rates charged by other organisations (hotels, halls etc) and make recommendations on possible revised rates at the next Board meeting.

#### **FUND-RAISING REPORT**

Mrs Urquhart intimated that possible fund-raising events are still being held back by a lack of committee members. The Minister stated that the Board needs to take a decision on whether further fund-raising efforts continue in the absence of more volunteers from the Board, congregation etc. Shona Jamieson questioned whether members of the congregation realise the difference between social committee and fund-raising committee activities. All agreed that the ideal would be to have more, preferably younger, people involved in a whole range of church activities.

Board members decided that a further plea for such volunteers should be made through Intimation Sheets etc and at the Annual Stated Meeting.

#### **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

a) It was proposed and agreed that Diane Maciver be co-opted as a Board member. This to be ratified at the Annual Stated Meeting on 9 March, 2008.

b) It was intimated that the church minibus had recently passed its MOT. There is still a need for further volunteers to boost the small pool of drivers.

c) The current exemption for churches from water and waste water charges is due to expire on 31 March, 2010. There will be considerable cost implications if this exemption is not extended following a consultation process which is presently underway. The Church of Scotland is encouraging individual churches to make representation on this issue to the Scottish Government and copy correspondence to appropriate MSPs. The Board agreed that such representation should be made on behalf of our church.

d) Moira Trotter has agreed to be the co-ordinator for the church's Spring Fair due to be held on Saturday 5 April, 2008. Those interested in helping or providing stalls were asked to contact Moira.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Annual Stated Meeting will be held on Sunday 9 March, 2008 following the service.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 April, 2008 at 7.30pm.

(Note that this has been re-arranged from Wednesday 9 April, 2008)

The minister closed the meeting with the Grace.

**Chairman**

**Clerk to the Board**

**Date**