

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ELGIN HIGH CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL BOARD HELD IN THE CHURCH HALL ON WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008.

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

A welcome was extended to our newly appointed Associate Minister, Rev. Douglas Stevenson. Sara Anderson was also welcomed to her first Board meeting.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted on behalf of A Chapman, M Crossland, H Davidson, G Hay, A Hyland, D Maciver, L Mitchell, Jennie Morrison, G Rae, M Rankine, M Roger, N Roger and D Trotter.

ATTENDANCE

There were 39 members in attendance.

MINUTES

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Paula Baker and seconded by Frank Harris.

The Minister indicated that the intention in future is to issue Board minutes to members by e-mail. Minutes will also continue to be available on the church web-site and in the folder in the hall. Those members who do not have access to e-mail can request a copy of the minutes from the Clerk to the Board. This approach was approved by Board members.

MATTERS ARISING

The Minister confirmed that, as requested by the Board at the last meeting, a letter had been sent to the Scottish Government (copied to the local MSP) expressing our concern that the Water and Sewerage Charges Exemption Scheme which our church currently benefits from may be abolished in 2010. Letters of acknowledgment have been received from both the Scottish Government and the local MSP, Richard Lochhead, and we must now await the outcome of the consultation process.

CLERK'S REPORT

Mr Fraser intimated that he had sent letters of thanks to five Board members who had stepped down, after many years of service, at the Stated Annual Meeting on Sunday 9 March 2008. These were Joan Cook, Wilma Fraser, Leah Fyffe, Audrey Grant and Nancy Walker. The Minister had also sent letters of appreciation.

Mr Fraser had also issued welcome letters to new Board members Sara Anderson and Diane Maciver.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr Shayer summarised the payments made since the last meeting and commented on the balances held in various funds. For example, a refund of £6,905 is still outstanding from the Ashley Bartlam Partnership in respect of the windows' fund. Although offerings have improved a little the total for March was particularly low. Thanks were expressed to all those who had contributed to the success of the Spring Fair which generated income of £1,386 for church funds.

Mr Shayer explained the basis on which our church makes payments to the Church of Scotland's Ministries and Mission Fund and expressed the view that this payment represents very good value for money in terms of what we receive in return. Mr Shayer intimated that copies of the Annual Accounts for the parish of Birnie and Pluscarden are available from him on request.

## PROPERTY REPORT

Mr Urquhart summarised works completed and passed for payment since the last meeting. Thanks were expressed to George and Anne Rae for gifting a screen for church use. Given the unsatisfactory delays in getting external painter work undertaken Mr Urquhart asked members to let him know of any alternative local contractors who could be approached to tender for outstanding work. A review of all existing heating maintenance contracts is due to be undertaken.

Mention was made of plans relating to the prayer corner and the area for use by the disabled. Aligned to this, reference was made to plans to install the stone cross removed from the hall gable in this area which will necessitate moving a memorial plaque. Following discussion on where various items would be located George Stewart proposed that work should proceed on the basis already recommended by the Property Committee. This was fully endorsed by Board members.

Mr Urquhart confirmed that responsibility for Health and Safety matters and Fire Safety precautions will remain with the Property Committee and not with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as previously reported.

Reference was made to a communication received from the Moray Council concerning trade waste collection services, the need to separate items and the costs involved. The Board accepted Charles Stewart's generous offer to take items to the Council's recycling depot, on a trial basis initially, until the volumes involved can be monitored. To make the process easier notices will be put on display for kitchen etc users asking them to separate items such as cans, glass, paper and cardboard.

An application for an On and Off Sales Licence has been made to the Moray Licensing Board by Messrs Gordon & MacPhail.

PROPERTY  
REPORT (CONT)

On the basis of clarification provided by Mr Urquhart Board members confirmed that they have no objections to this application.

Following the completion of forms relating to Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations the Environmental Services Department of the Moray Council has deemed our church to be the operator of a food business. There are a number of ramifications resulting from this including the level of cleaning required for kitchens and their equipment such as dish-washers. Given that we provide food at a number of events such as church coffee mornings it was proposed that we form a small managing committee to be responsible for the kitchen, including the requirements of Food Hygiene legislation. It was proposed, and approved by the Board, that Ann Grant will be the Convener for this managing committee. It was also agreed that Ann will approach others to invite them to become members of this committee. This to include Kevin Morrison (BB member) who has experience of working with commercial catering equipment.

Following an annual maintenance inspection Connaught Gasforce Ltd has confirmed that the kitchen cooker installation is satisfactory but the ventilation system does not comply with current standards. Further clarification has been requested but if works require to be carried out this could prove to be expensive.

SOCIAL REPORT

Mrs Rae made reference to the successful soup and sandwich lunch provided at the ecumenical event, Walking Together with Christ, held on 1 March 2008. A social evening planned for 26 April 2008 has been cancelled as a suitable topic had not been identified. A congregational walk, with a difference, will be held in June and further information will be available in due course.

HALL REPORT

Mrs Garrow outlined proposed revised rates for organisations making use of the church hall, kitchen and meeting rooms. The Board unanimously approved the new letting fees. An increased fee for the Church Officer was also approved. Future confirmed bookings were summarised. A request has been received from Milnes High School for use of the hall for a coffee morning, with stalls, to help raise funds for a school expedition to Vietnam. This was approved by the Board on a no charge basis although a donation to church funds would be acceptable.

FUND-RAISING  
REPORT

Mrs Urquhart reported, favourably, that the Fund-raising committee now has the following five members as well as herself: Lorna Auld, Margaret Cameron, Charles Stewart, Norma Strachan and Sheena Wilson. A further volunteer would be welcome. A planning meeting is due to be held to consider future events.

ADDITIONAL  
ITEMS

a) Flower Provision – George Stewart reported on the high number of gaps on the list of those providing flowers, or funds for their provision, for Sunday services. In the past the Guild had provided funds for the ‘blank’ weeks but the demise of the Guild means this no longer happens. The Minister stated that the poor level of uptake could be due to a lack of awareness on the part of members of the congregation. An item will be placed in future Intimation Sheets inviting increased participation and explaining that Margaret Anderson will arrange the display of flowers on behalf of those making a financial contribution.

b) Church Herald – Gordon Farquhar proposed that a letter of appreciation be sent to Ed Stuart, on behalf of the Board, thanking him for his many years of producing our church Herald. Ed will have to give this up as a result of a change in his shift patterns at work but he will continue to produce the weekly Intimation Sheets. The Minister also recorded thanks to Alison and Scott Forsyth who will take over production of the Herald after June 2008.

DATE OF NEXT  
MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday 17 June 2008 at the earlier start time of 7.00pm prior to a meeting of the church Session.

The Minister closed the meeting with the Benediction.

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Chairman

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Clerk to the Board

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Date