

MINUTES OF THE STATED ANNUAL MEETING
OF
ELGIN HIGH CHURCH
HELD IN CHURCH FOLLOWING MORNING WORSHIP
ON SUNDAY 9 MARCH 2008

- CONSTITUTION The Minister, Rev. Julie Woods thanked the sixty-four members of the congregation who stayed on following morning worship and constituted the meeting with prayer.
- MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING Copies of the minutes of the Stated Annual Meeting of the congregation held on Sunday, 25 March 2007 were issued to those present and accepted as a true record on a proposal by David Russell and seconded by Anne Grant.
- BOARD MEMBERSHIP The Minister thanked Joan Cook, Wilma Fraser, Leah Fyffe, Audrey Grant and Nancy Walker who are stepping down after many years of Board membership. The twelve members continuing on the Board were named. A further three people Diane Maciver, Libby Mitchell and Margaret Rankine who had been co-opted to the Board since the last Stated Annual Meeting were confirmed as Board members. Sara Anderson also received approval from the congregation for Board membership (proposed/seconded by Ronnie and Jill Scotland).
- MINISTER'S REPORT The Minister gave a report which highlighted a wide range of activities and changes that had taken place during the past year. Mention was made of Mrs Paula Baker, a very popular and welcome addition to the ministerial team. Work towards recruiting an Associate minister to complete the team continues. The church roll was decreased to six hundred and sixty-nine during the year but on the positive side the Toddler Group has gone from strength to strength. During 2007 a great deal of time was spent considering the future of the church buildings; a number of different options was discussed and considered – and although there are advantages to developing some of the unused spaces in the building it is clear that, at present, the time is not right for that. The hope, over the next year, is to concentrate on encouraging younger members to become more active and in doing so build up enthusiasm for a development project which will enable our church to reach out into the community for the twenty-first century. There is great potential here – the future is in our hands! The Minister concluded her report by thanking a fantastic team of volunteers, without whom the church would be a poorer place. Although too numerous to mention the Minister identified a few people who she feels are particularly dedicated to our church and our community. Congregation members showed their appreciation to those named by the Minister.
- SESSION REPORT The Session Clerk, David Russell, reported that the number of serving members had reduced slightly to forty-five in the past year. A new elder, Anne Garrow, was appointed during the year. The membership roll

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reduced by 6% to six hundred and sixty-nine as at December 2007.

Thanks were expressed to Mrs Paula Baker, who replaced Margaret King, and Rev. Anne Attenburrow for their contribution to the ministerial team particularly during the time of the Minister's ill-health.

The first Men's Meeting took place in January 2007 and men in the congregation were encouraged to consider joining and sharing in these popular social evenings.

Mention was made of the joint elder's conference with our linked charges of Birnie and Pluscarden in February 2007 and a number of joint services. The congregation was asked to continue to support our church and Session in whatever way possible.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Treasurer, Ian Shayer, presented a financial report based on the full accounts for the year to 31 December 2007. A summary of the accounts was distributed to those in attendance. Copies of the full accounts, now produced in a new format as required by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), are available on request.

Mention was made of various changes which have taken place. For example, all Board and Session members are now church Trustees. The full accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2007 were considered and approved at the Board meeting held on 12 February 2008 and were scrutinised by an independent examiner, Cecil Taylor, on 2 March 2008. The congregation now receive rather than approve accounts at the Stated Annual Meeting.

The new annual report/accounts format requires a mission statement and targets and performance information to be provided. Organisations operating within the church or associated with the church also have to be listed.

Appreciation was voiced by the Treasurer for income received as a result of various fund-raising activities during the past year (eg Spring Fair, Christmas Bazaar, photo competition/calendar production etc). The income of £56,000 through Gift Aid offerings and tax recovered on Gift Aid was highly commendable but sadly highlights the fact that 80% of church offerings come from only 27% of the members of the congregation. The average offering per person for the past financial year was £105.

Of great concern was the church's financial deficit of £8,058 in 2007 and a 13% reduction in income at the start of 2008 compared to the same period last year. If this trend continues it is inevitable that there will be a substantial deficit by the end of this financial year. In an effort to reverse this trend the Moray Presbytery will consider, at a meeting in May 2008, the possibility of pursuing a stewardship campaign to increase church income throughout Moray.

Mr Shayer thanked Finance Committee members and those who have audited the accounts of organisations within the church during the past year. Particular appreciation was expressed to David Trotter, Gift Aid/Free Will Offering Convener, for his considerable efforts over a long number of years.

The Minister and the congregation showed their appreciation for all that Mr Shayer does on behalf of our church.

PROPERTY
REPORT

The Property Convener, Donald Urquhart, provided a report on works undertaken and expenditure incurred during 2007 along with the proposed budget for the year 2008.

Work completed in 2007 included the five remaining Hall roof-lights, high level masonry and window repairs. Final expenditure amounted to £14,522 compared to a budget of £16,981. The underspend was largely due to external painter work not being carried out due to adverse weather conditions.

Mention was made of the considerable debate and consideration over the past year regarding the future development of our church buildings. A Property Committee report to the Board meeting on 12 February 2008 concluded that the time was no longer right for such a project. The reality is that until some form of a major fund-raising campaign is undertaken or funds emerge in some other way the wherewithal to proceed does not exist at this time. The major repairs undertaken in the past, however, means that we can be reasonably confident that the church buildings are wind and watertight and generally in a good state of repair.

Works to be undertaken during 2008 will include external painter work together with the ongoing, unavoidable, essential maintenance and emerging repairs. A small amount has been included in the budget for the completion of the prayer sanctuary and disabled facility.

Financial constraints are recognised in the property budget of £7,500 for 2008 which was approved at the Board meeting held on 12 February 2008.

Mr Urquhart recorded his thanks to all members of the Property Committee for their continued support and encouragement

The Minister and the congregation showed their appreciation for all that Mr Urquhart does on behalf of our church.

CLOSE OF
MEETING

The Minister once again thanked all those seen and unseen for their continued support and closed the meeting with a Blessing.

Minister

Clerk to the Board

Date