

LOCHGILPHEAD PARISH CHURCH

The Kirk Session met on-line (using Zoom) in the afternoon of 13 July 2021. The Rev. Hilda Smith opened the meeting with a short reading from Psalm 23 before constituting the meeting with prayer.

Sederunt

Rev. Hilda Smith (Moderator), Edna Armstrong, Elma Munro, Ian Davidson, Jessie Cranston, Margaret Davidson, Mary MacDonald, May Taylor and Sandy Taylor.

Apologies for Absence

Frances Fleming and Malcolm Macfadyen

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Kirk Session held on 31 May 2021 were read and approved; proposed by Ian Davidson, seconded Mary MacDonald.

CHURCH OPENING

The Session gave consideration to a number of practical issues in advance of the opening of the church; inc. advertisements, Covid protection measures (masks, seating plans, booking, attendance records, plate etc.), praise (no singing, music machine, no children's address).

CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk made reference to an e-mail regarding a Learn Eldership opportunity, described as Regional Conversations on Pastoral Care, a series of Learn online conversations scheduled this September. Session Clerk to circulate the details once again for the interest and potential subscription by LPC elders.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Members discussed their anticipation/hope for a reducing restriction in numbers attending church. Hilda reported on advice sought from '121' with regard to children, and whether they counted as part of our limited numbers. Advice confirmed that children under five years of age don't count, whereas others, whilst sitting in church (sitting with parents or at the 'craft table') do. Hilda confirmed that regardless of the changing levels, we would be required to undertake and report on our risk assessments.

Members reported favourably on operation of our church booking and track/trace arrangements. Mary described an outline door/welcome team rota: 25th July (Elma + 1), 1st August (Mary + 1), 8th August (Ian and Margaret) and 15th August (Sandy and May)

Hilda suggested that in the event of restricted Hall numbers and a substantial demand to come together for tea, coffee we should ask our members to resort to the church.

DECISION: The Kirk Session homologated their earlier decision to permit singing in church, subject to the wearing of masks.

PRESBYTERY

Hilda reminded Members of the need to appoint a Presbytery elder. Hilda outlined the duties

(Presbytery Contd.)

and commitment required of a Presbytery elder.

No one expressed interest during the course of the meeting; however, members did agree to give further consideration to the request.

FINANCE

Balances as at 9th July 2021

General	£ 6,121.82
Fabric	£ 4,473.06
Project	£ 41,877.67
Social Fund (Café, Hall & Social)	£ 1,380.80
Youth Fund	£ 499.00
Benevolent Fund	£ 46.03

Mary spoke to her report, highlighting the receipt of Gift Aid of £2,762.64 in the last few days.

Mary thanked Edna for her work in claiming this for us – it is crucial to our funds.

Mary reported that she had found it necessary over the last two years to have ‘borrowed’ a total sum of £12,000 from the Project Account to keep our essential bills paid and this is still outstanding. Realistically, in light of current circumstances, I cannot see this ever being repaid.

Continuing Mary recognised the continuing support of our congregation, which has given sterling financial support over the last 16 months. Despite this, we will still have a continuing, substantial shortfall each month and we simply cannot go back to the congregation at this time asking for more. Our financial situation is absolutely dire but I am hoping that we can reach the end of 2021 without having to ‘borrow’ from the Project Fund again this year.

SUBSTANTIVE BUSINESS

Property

Re-opening of the Church

Ian reported on work commissioned to facilitate the re-opening of the church - thorough cleaning and disinfection - by West Highland Specialist Cleaning Services (Oban), prior to 6 June.

Estimates for Agreed Work

Ian reported that he is in the course of obtaining prices for the lead flashings and the replacement external door, and had sought estimates for the painting of the woodwork in the hall and the vestibule in the Church. Ian advised that he had yet to receive estimates from two potential contractors, but anticipated that none would be received.

DECISION: The Session asked Ian to proceed on the basis of the lowest estimate should additional estimates be received.

Rear Corridor

Ronnie Neill, the presbytery property adviser has visited the church hall, and Ian awaits his report on how best to deal with the condensation/ dampness problem in the corridor. That said, Ian noted that he had seen no dampness these past few months since the work undertaken by AC Builders.

Redecoration

Ian expressed his gratitude to the small team (Malcolm, David, Niall and Sandy, who together with Ian and Margaret) who redecorated the walls in the hall, and to Ian McPhee for lending us his scaffolding for the job.

Heating

Ian advised that he had instructed the servicing of the air source heat pump, for the first time since its installation seven years ago.

**Mid Argyll Planning Group
Tuesday 6th July 2021 at 2.30pm
Lochgilphead Parish Church Hall**

1. The meeting was opened by Prayer read by Mrs. Alison Hay, Interim Moderator.
 2. **Sederunt:** Alison Hay (AH), Archie McArthur (AM), Lord Weir (LW), Caroline Waterhouse (CW), Mary McDonald (MM), Stephen Hunter (SH), Ian Davidson (ID), Linda Tighe (LT) and David Logue (DL)
 3. **Apologies:** Sandy Taylor.
 4. **Update on present situation.** AH announced that Rev Hilda Smith has decided to retire as from end of August, her last service being 8th August. This obviously changed the situation from a position of 2 ministers to 1 in our proposed mission “team”. However AH said we should still continue to construct our mission plan. AH also informed the group that Presbytery is looking at amalgamating parishes/unions to broaden boundaries. ID wondered if we should be waiting for this exercise to be completed before we continued with our mid Argyll plans, but AH stated we should continue with our task at this stage. It was also noted that Lochgilphead would not be in a position to call a new Minister.
 5. **Mission plan issues.** DL's paper had been distributed and discussion took place around various points raised in the document. We all had to start by looking at the makeup of our current parishes, for example AH spoke about Lochgilphead (working age population/young people/not many really engaging with the church(es). Tayvallich, Kilmartin and South Knapdale (mainly retired/travelling to work). Ardrishaig (similar to Lochgilphead). How do we reach out to the population? With a possible team of 1 minister, 5 readers, 1 OLM, and lay worship leaders.
(LT asked if we could advertise for an OLM or did they have to come from our Parish cohort? AH said we would not be able to advertise.) DL thought a youth worker with input to schools would be beneficial. MM suggested a link with MAYDS (Mid Argyll Youth Development Service). Discussion took place around new technology, using online and streaming services. Would congregations be happy with services on another day of the week for example? Currently we have the Church cafe in Lochgilphead, the cafe Church in Achnamara, Loch Fyneside Prayer meeting group and Kilmartin open their building for local community groups.
LW asked about Rev David Carruthers. LW indicated that it was a serious matter and quite an onerous task for 1 minister to take on this role and the demands of the wider parish would need 2 ministers in the team. LT suggested David should be part of this group as he had a significant role to play going forward and it might be advantageous for him to meet with the current people available throughout the area who could work in the team. AH agreed to contact David to invite him to next meeting.
MM was aware Lochgilphead had written a mission plan a number of years ago. Similarly Kilmartin had looked at their parish's future needs. AH said we should bear in mind ecumenical “help” which might be available to us. Father Simon, for instance, would be happy to help with Communion. We should not lose sight of buildings issue and should look at realistic future plans for all our buildings.
MM mentioned a possible link with a police/hospital partnership looking at mental health; should we be looking at joining these types of current local initiatives?
1. Taking all these issues together , AH suggested we meet again on **Monday 26th July** to sit down and start writing our mid Argyll plan. It was further suggested that 1 person from each parish attend.
 2. **Next meeting agreed for Monday 26th July 2021 at 2pm in Lochgilphead Hall.**
 3. After thanking everyone for their attendance AH closed the meeting with a short Prayer.

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